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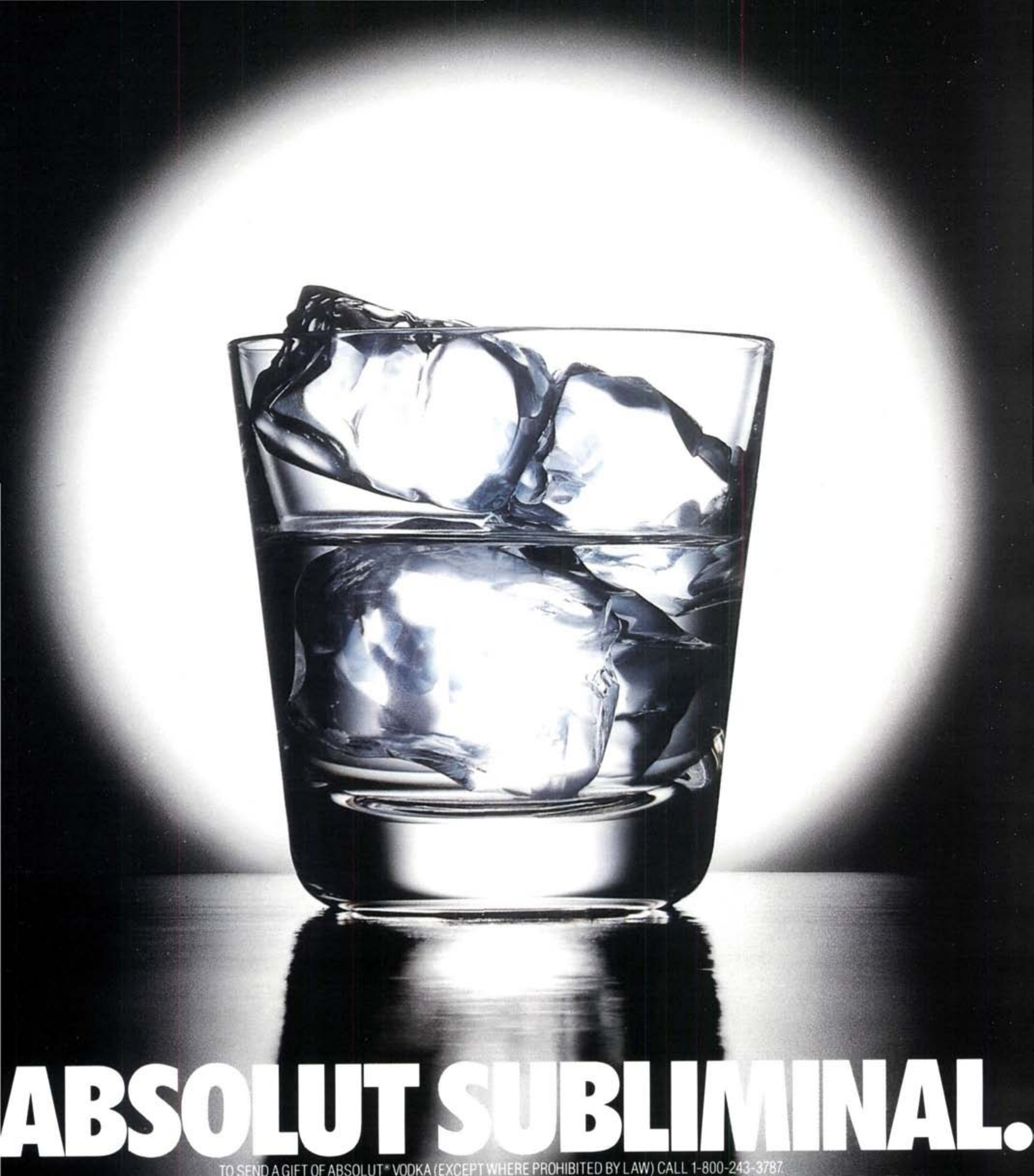

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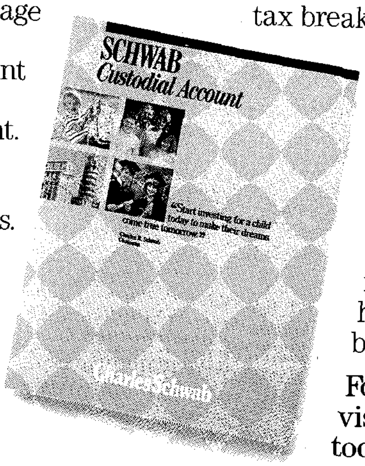

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21			

MOTHERS got sort of a raw deal this year at the 52nd Street Project's offering of plays by some of the city's most ardent nine-to-fourteen-year-old dramatists. "Family Stories," which ran from February 21 to March 4 at Ensemble Studio Theatre, presented work by veterans of Daniel Judah Sklar's wonderful Playmaking program, and it was absolutely chockfull of mean and menacing moms.

There was one of those hard-to-get-through-to mothers who give all the attention to the baby, in Monica Jenkins' "Children Should Be Heard Not Only Seen," and in Karen Myrie's "If There's a Will There's a Way" one of those gadabout mothers who go out on dates a lot and expect you to do the windows. Justine Cook's "The Two Runaways" had one of those loud yuppie mothers who can't seem to forget that they started out behind the supermarket checkout counter, and Paula Myrie's "You Just Don't Understand" featured one of those mothers who, well, just don't understand, while the mother in Shirley Rumierk's "Portrait out of Focus" couldn't cook worth a damn. Just about the only ones who came off at all well were the deceased mother in Fran-Marie Fargardo's "Memories" and the offstage mother in Jessica Cordero's "Finally."

Jeb, a nine-year-old on whose acuity and perception we sometimes rely at such theatrical events, seemed unimpressed by such blatantly anti-maternal propaganda. Jeb's more of a fact man than a theme man, anyway, and he pointed out (quite rightly) that the beer that one of the actors seemed to be drinking out of a can wasn't real, and that, as he put it, "almost every girl in this thing had a Walkman!" And when the mother in Shamine Gibson's "The Vampire Story" locked her sons and husband out of the house for not helping with the housework and threatened not to let them back in until they started "acting like vampires and not like human beings," Jeb remarked with great feeling and ambiguity, "Look who's talking."

Open displays of emotion sometimes make us uncomfortable (we're easily embarrassed), and an awful lot of plays this year seemed to end with characters' telling one another, "I love you." Once or twice we looked over at Jeb to see how he was taking it. But Jeb's a cool guy. He didn't seem to mind. We heard later he thought there was too much arguing, though.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

Aspects of Love—The new Andrew Lloyd Webber musical, which is still running in the West End. Directed by Trevor Nunn, the show features Ann Crumb, Kathleen Rowe McAllen, Michael Ball, and Kevin Colson. Previews begin March 19. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Bad Habits—A revival of two 1973 one-acts by Terrence McNally. Nathan Lane, Kate Nelligan, and Faith Prince are in the cast. Directed by Paul Benedict. Previews through March 18. Opens March 20 at 8. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof—Kathleen Turner is Maggie in this production of Tennessee Williams' play. With Daniel Hugh Kelly as Brick, and Charles Durning and Polly Holliday as Big Daddy and Big Mama. Directed by Howard Davies. Previews March 14-20. Opens March 21 at 6:30. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220.)

Circle Repertory Company—Presenting **PRELUDE TO A KISS**, a new comedy by Craig Lucas. Alec Baldwin, Barnard Hughes, and Mary-Louise Parker are in the cast, which was directed by Norman René. Preview on March 13. Opens March 14 at 8. (99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

The Crucible—A revival of Arthur Miller's drama, with Justine Bateman, who is making her New York stage début. Directed by Gerald Freedman. Previews begin March 14. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883.)

The Grapes of Wrath—Gary Sinise, Lois Smith, Terry Kinney, and others in the Steppenwolf Theatre Company's production of the Steinbeck classic. Adapted and directed by Frank Galati. In previews. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Heart of a Dog—Deloss Brown's adaptation of Mikhail Bulgakov's 1925 novella. Previews on March 14. Opens March 15 at 7. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

Lettice & Lovage—Maggie Smith and Margaret Tyzack star in this London comedy by Peter Shaffer. The cast also includes Paxton Whitehead and Bette Henritze. Staged by Michael Blakemore. In previews. (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

Making Movies—A new comedy by Aaron Sorkin, the author of "A Few Good Men." With Michael Countryman and David Marshall Grant. Previews through March 17. Opens March 18 at 7. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

Spare Parts—A play by Elizabeth Page. Opens March 12 at 7. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.)

NEW THIS SEASON

Away Alone—No one could accuse Janet Noble's sweet, feckless comedy about young Irish immigrants in the Bronx of being overly sophisticated. The play is innocent, sentimental, and old-fashioned—a little like the characters it portrays—but the feeling it creates in the audience becomes infectious, a little like the laughter it inspires. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st. St. 757-3318.)

Bovver Boys—A play by Willy Holtzman, presented by the Primary Stages theatre company. (45th Street Theatre, 354 W. 45th St. 333-7471. Closes March 18.)

By and for Havel—Two one-act plays: **AUDIENCE**, by Václav Havel, and Samuel Beckett's **CATASTROPHE**. (Reviewed in this issue.) (John Houseman Studio Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

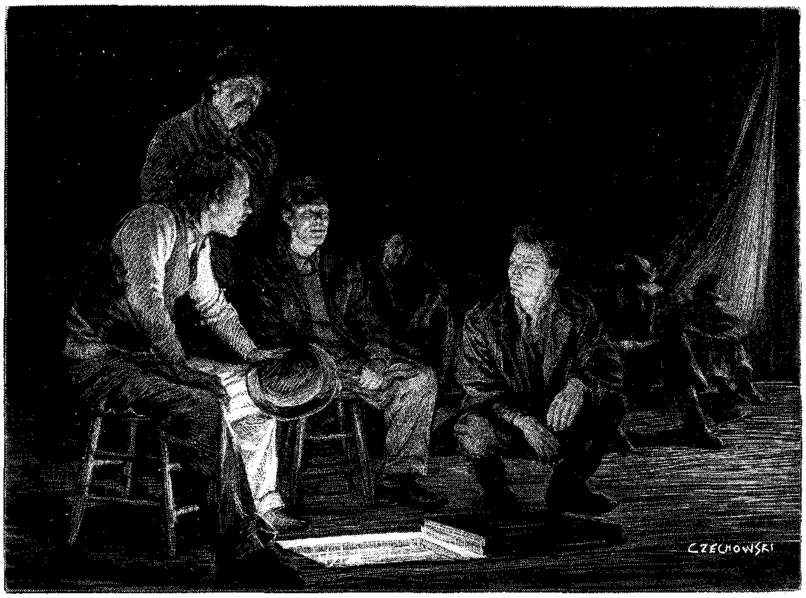
Carbondale Dreams—Steven Sater's trilogy about a family of Ugly-American Jews in the Midwest began life as a pair of one-acts entitled "Beth" and "Bradley." (A third, "Arnold," has since been added.) We sat through "Beth" and found it so full of Jewish self-loathing and hostility toward one's parents (the work reeks of autobiography) as to be unendurable. Perhaps Sater needs to be reminded that the best revenge is living well, not writing poorly. (Kaufman, 534 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

The Circle—Rex Harrison, Glynis Johns, Stewart Granger, and an able supporting company have raised Somerset Maugham to the heights of Sheridan and Congreve. The play is about an elderly couple who pay a visit to the wife's middle-aged son, whom she deserted thirty years before. Brian Murray directed the fine production. (Reviewed in our issue of 12/4/89.) (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

City of Angels—Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; James Naughton and Gregg Edelman, leading men; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in absolutely top form in this sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. The plot concerns the making of a private-eye movie (and the unmaking of its author). The spectacular settings and costumes were designed by Robin Wagner and Florence Klotz and lighted by Paul Gallo. (12/25/89) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)

Closer than Ever—This charmer amounts to an anthology of songs and sketches by Richard Maltby, Jr. (words), and David Shire (music), as sung and performed by Brent Barrett, Sally Mayers, Richard Muenz, and Lynne Wintersteller. They are a gifted quartet, and lucky to have such attractive, humorous, and tender songs to sing and words to speak. The fact that there is no amplification is an extra boon. (11/13/89) (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

Dylan Thomas: Return Journey—The Welsh actor Bob Kingdom stands shoulder to shoulder with Emlyn Williams and Alec Guinness, who have also played Thomas, in this performance of excerpts from the prose and poetry, both public and private, of the late Mr. T. It



Terry Kinney, Skipp Sudduth, Terrance MacNamara, and Gary Sinise in "The Grapes of Wrath" may strike some members of the audience that the passages from the short stories, reminiscences, and letters have more feeling and humor—even beauty—than the poems. Anthony Hopkins directed. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Hudson Guild Theatre, 441 W. 26th St. 760-9810. Closes March 18.)

A Few Good Men—"Mister Roberts" meets "The Mary Tyler Moore Show." Aaron Sorkin's military-courtroom drama treats issues such as justice, honor, loyalty, and morality with the slick, facile smugness of a half-hour comedy series, but the performances, by an ace cast under Don Scardino's direction, are wonderful. (11/27/89) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Grand Hotel—The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show (except for a glorious, eccentric dance by Michael Jeter), but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. (11/27/89) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-0102.)

Gypsy—This revival of the great Sondheim-Styne-Laurents-Robbins musical (directed by Arthur Laurents himself) is so delightful —and the cast (led by Tyne Daly, Crista Moore, and Jonathan Hadary) so engaging—that we think anyone would be happier for having seen it. One suggestion: don't applaud when Mama Rose comes down the aisle (you'll drown out the first number). Trust Broadway; you'll have ample time to welcome Miss Daly when she mounts the steps and delivers her first onstage line. (12/4/89) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 246-0102.)

Jean Cocteau Repertory—Presenting **THE PRINCE OF HOMBERG**, by Heinrich von Kleist, in a new translation by Douglas Langworthy. (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

Meet Me in St. Louis—If you like the old M-G-M musical, you probably won't like this stage version, which combines the earnest, wholesome values of the movie with an aesthetic of surpassing vulgarity. In any case, why see the show when you can rent the movie? (11/20/89) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.)

A Mom's Life—A one-woman play written and performed by Kathryn Grody, and directed by Timothy Near. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Negro Ensemble Company—Presenting **BURNER'S FROLIC**, by Charles Fuller. With Adam Wade and Charles Weldon. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Closes March 18.)

Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll—All manner of hypocrites, fakes, liars, and other ethical discards are subjected to Eric Bogosian's incomparable mimicry and wit. The evening is anything but depressing. (2/26/90) (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

Some Americans Abroad—Yank Anglophilia and self-hatred among a group of academics on their department's annual theatre tour of England. The play, by Richard Nelson, would be worth seeing if only for the quality and style of the performances—particularly from Colin Stinton and Henderson Forsythe. You could do a lot worse than this well-observed and amusing comedy of manners. (So, as the record shows, could the playwright.) (2/26/90) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

The Sound of Music—Debby Boone is Maria in the New York City Opera's production of the Rodgers and Hammerstein classic. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

Square One—Steve Tesich's two-character play about contemporary courtship and marriage will either charm you to pieces or irritate the hell out of you. Directed by Jerry Zaks—with Richard Thomas and Lizbeth Mackay —it mixes slightly absurdist comedy with dystopian clichés. (3/5/90) (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103. Closes March 18.)

Tru—Robert Morse gives a deeply thought-out, accomplished performance as Truman Capote—by turns funny, bitchy, ironic, and rueful—at the end of his life and his tether. The play was written and directed by Jay Presson Allen. (1/1/90) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Uncle Vanya—Michael Frayn's adaptation of Chekhov's play. (Rapp Arts Center, 220 E. 4th St. 529-5921. Closes March 25.)

When She Danced—"She" is Isadora Duncan in this sad-edged comedy by Martin Sherman, which is set in Paris in 1923, when Isadora's career has come to a close, although she doesn't know it. She is surrounded by an international bevy of servitors and admirers and her crazy Russian husband; the polyglot dialogue is one of the better jokes. Elizabeth Ashley appears in the leading role, and she is admirably supported by, among others, Marcia Jean Kurtz, Jonathan Walker, Robert Sean Leonard, and Marcia Lewis. Tim Luscombe was the impeccable director. (2/26/90) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

LONG RUNS

BLACK AND BLUE: An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while Ruth Brown, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde, and a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Closes March 31.) . . . **DRIVING MISS DAISY:** Frances Sternhagen and Arthur French star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run turns thirty this year. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1990:** A source of continual merriment, this recently updated revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **THE HEIDI CHRONICLES:** Wendy Wasserstein's play looks at first glance like standard baby-boom playwriting fare, but some alchemical combination of graceful-mindedness and good writing enables her to capture, lampoon, and transcend her generation all at the same time. With Brooke Adams. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **JEROME ROBBINS' BROADWAY:** A collection of high spots from "On the Town," "Billion Dollar Baby," "High Button Shoes," "The King and I," "Peter Pan," "West Side Story," "Gypsy," "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," and "Fiddler on the Roof," all of which were choreographed or directed, or both, by Jerome Robbins. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **THE KATHY AND MO SHOW: PARALLEL LIVES:** Comedy skits and vignettes about gender and its role in society, written and performed by Kathy Najimy and Mo Gaffney. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394.) . . . **LEND ME A TENOR:** The setting of this farce by Ken Ludwig is a hotel suite in Cleveland in 1934, where a famous tenor who is booked to sing "Otello" takes an overdose of barbiturates. A substitute must be found. Under Jerry Zaks' direction, all the surprises up the dramatist's sleeve are brought to comic life. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY:** Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York corporate raider's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

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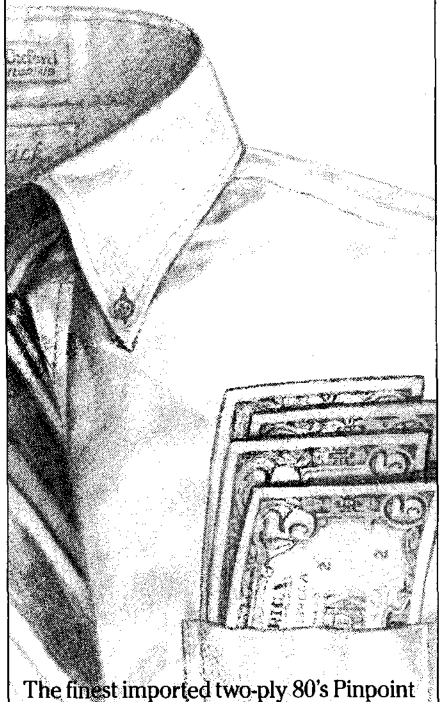

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DANCE

MERCE CUNNINGHAM has made three new dances over the past year; as one of his dancers puts it, the master of chance operations is "on a roll." New Yorkers will be able to see all the novelties during the Cunningham company's City Center season, March 13-25. We have been able to preview two of them, and can say that their scores alone are certain to attract attention. One of these, the music for Cunningham's "August Pace," is by a relative youngster in the Cunningham-Cage enterprise: Michael Pugliese, a percussionist who has been performing with the company for five years. Mr. Pugliese has composed a few other scores for dancers, but this is his first for Cunningham himself, and it is *big*—in sound, in ambition, in concept. The score is for percussion instruments that are indigenous to a variety of Third World countries.

Mr. Pugliese and several colleagues play, among other things, Indian tabla and sitar, Brazilian berimbau, Thai angklungs (a scale made up of three bamboo tubes, shaken to produce a woody sound), African slit-drum, Tibetan finger cymbals, and Native American drum. The music was set down without the use of chance procedures, and much of it will be performed live. The musicians have not tried to accommodate themselves to the musicological histories of the instruments. "The rhythms and patterns we play are not traditional," Mr. Pugliese says. "We're like clarinet players picking up the trombone. I'm doing what I know how to do, that's all. But that's what's magical about Cage and Cunningham. They don't collaborate in a conventional sense, and yet there's always a forward motion in the music and dance, because of chance; there's personal discovery." Mr. Pugliese added that it was pure coincidence that the designer for "August Pace" is a young Soviet artist who goes by the sobriquet of Afrika; that the backdrop and the costumes emphasize the arrangement of the work's imaginative world into a strict binary opposition; that the choreography consists almost entirely of male-female duets; that he named his score "Peace Talks," concluding it on the eve of the recent political changes worldwide; and that he saw his music married to a dance whose title almost reads as the Latin for "great peace."

MERCE CUNNINGHAM DANCE COMPANY—In a two-week engagement that will run through March 25. March 13 at 7:30: "August Pace" (New York première), "Fabrications," and "Cargo X."... ¶ March 14 at 8: "RainForest," "Inventions" (New York première), and "Pictures." . . . ¶ March 15 at 8: "Trails" and "Five Stone Wind." . . . ¶ March 16 at 8: "Shards," "August Pace," and "Fabrications." . . . ¶ March 17 at 2: "RainForest," "August Pace," and "Pictures." . . . ¶ March 17 at 8: "Trails," "Inventions," and "Fabrications." . . . ¶ March 18 at 3: "Cargo X" and "Five Stone Wind." . . . ¶ March 20 at 8: "Points in Space," "Polarity" (première), and "Fabrications." . . . ¶ March 21 at 8: "Inventions," "Quartet," and "Field and Figures." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

FELD BALLETS/NY—March 13 at 8 and March 18 at 7:30: "A Footstep of Air," "Circa," and "Skara Brae."... ¶ March 14 and March 20 at 8: "Medium:Rare," "Charmed Lives," "At Midnight," and "Mother Nature." . . . ¶ March 15, March 17, and March 21, all at 8: "Kore," "Asia," "Adieu," and "Ah Scarlatti." . . . ¶ March 16 at 8: "Contra Pose," "Shadow's Breath," "Danzon Cubano," and "Mother Nature." . . . ¶ March 18 at 2: "Theatre," "The Gods Amused," "Danzon Cubano," and "Ah Scarlatti." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Through April 1.)

AMERICAN DANCE REPERTORY THEATRE—March 14-15 and March 17 at 8: Three programs of works by Doris Humphrey. . . . ¶ March 16 at 8: Works by José Limón and Eleanor King. (Pace Downtown Theatre, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. 488-1715.)

DONALD BYRD/THE GROUP—Presenting the première of "Surveillance" and of "Multicultural Man," a solo work. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. March 15-17 at 8 and March 18 at 3. Through March 25.)

"OBA OBA 90"—An updated version of a Brazilian music-and-dance revue that played in New York in 1988. Previews March 13-14. Opens March 15 at 6:45. (Marquis Theatre, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102.)

NIGHT LIFE

YOU'RE looking for an unpretentious neighborhood bar, an out-of-the-way place that will impress your friends with your nightcrawler savvy. You're looking for a place with a good house band—one with a garage-rock informality, a sense of humor, and an arsenal of good songs. The Ludlow Street Café (165 Ludlow Street), where Beat Rodeo plays every Monday night, may be what you're looking for. But not everyone there is necessarily looking for you. "I hope you're not writing about this place," a guy sitting next to us said, eying our notebook. "Too many people know about it already." In the almost two years that Beat Rodeo has filled the Monday-night slot at Ludlow Street, they've cultivated a following, but as word of the band (and the club) has spread some loyalists have begun to fear encroachment—a pestilence of uptown or, God forbid, bridge-and-tunnel fun-seekers.

The café, a below-stairs tenement-building room with a low ceiling and wavy gray floorboards, looks like a typical Lower East Side apartment. A Monday night here feels more like a party than like a night-club performance—the band sets up on the floor, everyone seems to be drinking either Bud or Rolling Rock—and most of the partygoers are the artists and musicians who have colonized this neighborhood in the past few years. Beat Rodeo has been around since the early eighties; they once had aspirations toward the big time, but after a failed romance with a major label—they put out two albums a few years ago that never caught fire—they're content to be a bar band. They play country songs, rock songs, blues numbers, jazzy instrumentals, Byrds songs, Bob Dylan songs, Velvet Underground songs, and various found pop numbers. They sometimes sing in four-part harmony, and with three guitars they have a ringing, trebly, textured sound. There aren't that many good bar bands around; it's no wonder that Beat Rodeo fans want to keep news of this one under their hats.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Singer-pianist **STEVE ROSS,** whose lively, time-for-another-toast shows are heavily spiked with the transatlantic chatter of Noël Coward, Cole Porter, and other latter-day saints, is currently at work in the Oak Room. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—Night clubs don't give just anybody a string section and a full-page ad in the *Times*. **PEGGY LEE,** who has said of her fifty-odd-year career, "I tried to retire several times, but it didn't work," is in residence here. The singer recently released a collection of her own songs, and she'll be reciting chapter and verse. Ms. Lee's band will include pianist Mike Renzi, guitarist John Chiodini, and drummer Peter Grant. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine and eleven. Dining.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—The jazz personnel turns over nearly every night at this airy, loftlike restaurant-bar, in the gray zone between Zabar's and Columbia. Some may cry gentrification at the sight of the pastel walls, the potted greenery, and the bar crowded with Frascati sippers, but the floor-to-ceiling windows make for some fine Broadway viewing. On March 15 from eight to one, there's a blowout Charlie Parker tribute, a benefit performance that features a truckload of leading jazzmen: **WALTER DAVIS, JR., JIMMY HEATH, BEN RILEY, AL GREY, CLARK TERRY,** and many more. The host is Phil Schaap; the co-chairmen are **MAX ROACH** and Congressman Charles B. Rangel. Music can be heard from nine Sundays through Thursdays and from nine-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A glitzy, color-coördinated jazz house, designed for maximum seating efficiency, where blue-suspendered waitresses sweep by your table bearing shrimp cocktails, champagne, and other trappings of the good life. After the show, out-of-towners flock to the upstairs souvenir shop, where, at last check, Blue Note golf balls were still available. **OSCAR PETERSON,** a redwood in the forest that is mainstream jazz piano, brings an outfit here March 13-18; trumpeter **MAYNARD FERGUSON** starts up on March 20. Shows Tuesdays and Wednesdays at ten, and Thursdays through Sundays at nine and eleven-thirty. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone says uncle. Singer-guitarist **J. J. CALE**—the ancient Tulsa bluesman who gave Eric Clapton's career a boost by writing "After Midnight" and "Cocaine"—recently released his first album in six years, "Travel-Log." It's a typically spare and gritty effort, and Cale will be giving audiences here a taste of it March 16-17. Guitarists **JOHN RENBOURN** and **STEFAN GROSSMAN** come in for one night on March 20. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. The menu includes burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar where, if your neighbors coöperate, you can hear the beautiful, singular sound of musicians thinking. A trio consisting of **KENNY BARRON** (piano), **BEN RILEY** (drums), and **PAUL WEST** (bass) is in residence through March 17; the sparkling bebop pianist **TOMMY FLANAGAN** will be here with bassist **GEORGE MRAZ** on March 18. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The pastel uptown spa known as the Café Carlyle is home to the gravelly contralto **JULIE WILSON.** Ms. Wilson's new offering—in the past half-dozen years she has dedicated revues to famous and obscure chatter by Cole Porter, Stephen Sondheim, the Gershwins, and others—takes on the music of Cy Coleman, whose work can also be heard in "City of Angels," currently on Broadway. Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Bemelmans Bar, singer **RONNY WHYTE** presides at the piano from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

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Freddie Mac

ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONDON'S, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—A new, candlelit catacomb just east of Union Square. In an effort to get patrons close to the action, the owners—one of whom previously owned Sweet Basil and managed Indigo Blues—have crowded Condon's stage with tables. The result is that diners here will either find the atmosphere snug and intimate or spend a good deal of time trying to figure out where to run in the event of a fire. **MC COY TYNER,** a pianist who offers listeners a lot of bang for their buck, starts up with a trio on March 13. Music after ten.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—If submarines had jazz clubs, they might look like this basement haunt, which is reached by passing through a tight corridor where you half expect to bump into Admiral Nimitz. This is not the place for those with a fear of intimacy: at the front tables you can go eye to eye with your favorite performers, and no matter where you're seated there's not much room to practice your T'ai Chi. The guitarist **JOHN ABERCROMBIE,** who came of age in Billy Cobham's fusionist group Spectrum, will lead a quartet here March 13-18. **MOSE ALLISON,** a jazz-blues singer and a snappy lyricist, brings in a trio for six nights beginning March 20. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** who is the Thomas Edison of reverb, performs in a trio. The music begins at eight. Dining.

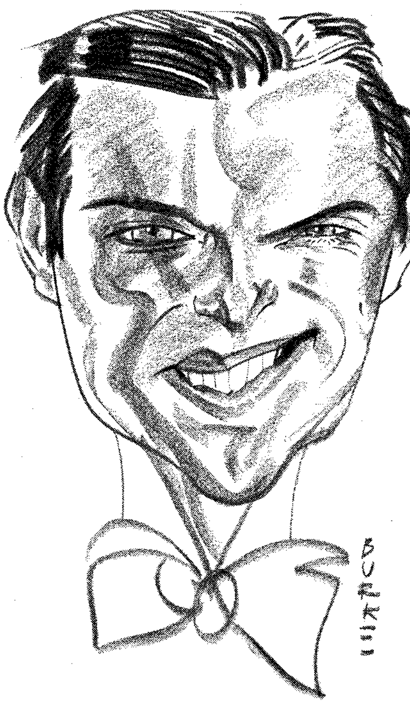
FORTUNE GARDEN PAVILION, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—Chinese food served in a plush greenhouse setting. Through the glass roof, which supports a jungle of potted greenery, you can admire the fruits of the midtown real-estate boom and, when available, the moon. A Steinway grand sits in the middle of the room, making things tricky for the waiters but improving the over-all quality of life. March 13-18, the bench is occupied by **DOROTHY DONEGAN,** a jazz iconoclast who says she took up music to avoid doing housework and whose shows usually include a fair amount of mugging, foot-stomping, and whirligig Art-Tatum-style piano. Pianist **RALPH SUTTON** begins a two-week engagement here March 20. Music from eight.

INDIGO BLUES, 221 W. 46th St. (221-0033)—A sleek, modern jazz club, in the basement of the Hotel Edison, with glass brick, space-age carpeting, and long strips of cool-blue neon. **PIECES OF A DREAM,** a young jazz-pop-funk trio from Philadelphia, comes to town for shows March 15-16; the **STEVE WEISBERG** orchestra claims March 21.

J'S, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—An Upper West Side jazz room, one steep flight up from the hurly-burly. Jazz people are on the premises nightly except Sundays, when a jukebox stocked with sixties rock and soul lights up. The schedule: the **JOHN PIZZARELLI** trio on March 15; **RANDA MC NAMARA'S** foursome on March 16; the **RAY ALEXANDER** trio on March 17; **KENT RAINE** on March 18; **ANDY TUCK** on March 19; the **LYNN BERNSTEIN** trio on March 20; and **GENE BERTONCINI'S** trio on March 21. Music from eight Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

LONE STAR ROADHOUSE, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—A Texan hangout where good old boys and Southern sorority girls mix with urban cowboys and those just looking. "Roadhouse" is an accurate description: it's a checked-tablecloth, long-necked-Bud, side-of-beef kind of place. **ROOMFUL OF BLUES,** the Rhode Island-based jump-blues outfit, is in action on March 16. The group was founded in 1967 by the guitarist Duke Robillard, and although Mr. Robillard has long since struck out on his own, the band still retains a few old-timers. Blues Traveler rounds out the bill. Music after nine. Dining.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (1-201 798-4064)—A small-pond club for big-fish bands. There's not much here to look at: Maxwell's is a baby-room affair with a dingy stage and a baby grand someone apparently tried to papier-mâché. Still, the bookers know their college-radio playlists: Sonic Youth, Wire, and the Feelies came through not long ago, and R.E.M. and 10,000 Maniacs landed here before even *you* knew who they were. **YO LA TENGO,** a three-piece rock group, is here on March 16. A lot of their songs rely on the slow build: they'll start out with lulling, Velvet Underground-style strumming and then lay on distorted guitar noise until the angst is at a full boil. On March 18, the Seattle-based metal band **SOUNDGARDEN,** whose big-label début, "Louder Than Love," has prompted Led Zeppelin comparisons, will test its audience's aural pain threshold.



Vince Giordano at Red Blazer Too

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—**MAUREEN MC GOVERN** is appearing through March 17 at this moondust-in-your-hair cabaret, where rest room attendants ask, "Is the water too warm?" Ms. McGovern long ago outgrew her reputation as the "disaster-theme queen," which she earned after her 1973 hit "The Morning After," the theme from "The Poseidon Adventure." She gave up movie music for Broadway and the cabaret scene, and as a pop singer she has been widely praised for her versatile, four-octave voice, her impressive technique, and the humor she brings to her interpretations. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays. . . . **RAINBOW ROOM** (632-5000): The great ballroom-in-the-sky was restored a few years back to its beautiful Art Deco self. The non-stop music is by the Rainbow Room Dance Band, a nineteen-thirties-and-onward show-tune outfit, and by Mauricio Smith & Friends, a rocketing Latin band. Music from seven-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, from eight on Fridays and Saturdays, and from six on Sundays.

CLUCK

For those who think they've sampled every variety of chicken that Chinatown has to offer, Chinatown Fair, on Mott Street, features a remarkably piquant duo: the World Famous Dancing & Tic-Tac-Toe Chickens. One needn't bring chopsticks to enjoy this pair; the birds are alive and clucking. Once inside the fair, you'll find the rug cutter of the two hens safely housed in a glass booth among a group of video games—games, like Centipede and Ms. Pac-man, you'd have thought extinct by now. Seventy-five cents in the slot cues her to leave the roost and peck her jukebox accompaniment into life, at which point she climbs aboard a rotating platform for twenty seconds of skittish two-stepping. It's essential viewing for anyone with an appetite for the absurd.

A more cerebral encounter can be had just across the arcade, in a booth bearing a Zenlike taunt: "SHE'S NOT CHICKEN, ARE YOU?" Here, fifty cents pits you against Birdbrain in that time-honored contest between X and O. There's a prize for anyone who defeats the hen ("LARGE BAG OF FORTUNE COOKIES"), but watch out: this bird is tough to beat.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A place where a fella and a gal can put on the feedbag, get a little tight, and cut a rug. When the band is swinging, and you and your dreamboat are cheek to cheek, everything can seem just swell. **VINCE GIORDANO & THE NIGHTHAWKS,** a tuxedoed outfit with felt-bannered music stands and vintage instruments, are here on Mondays and Tuesdays, playing the music of Hoagy Carmichael, Fletcher Henderson, and others. Music from six on Sundays, from eight-thirty Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine on Fridays and Saturdays.

RITZ, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—A rock establishment where the customer is not always right. The **CREATURES**—Siouxie and Budgie, formerly of Siouxie & the Banshees—headline on March 14. The duo's second LP, "Boomerang," which came out last year, has some familiar Banshee touches—tom-tom-drum calls, a strain of Orientalism, Siouxie's spooky, maxi-reverb vocals—and plenty of quirky instrumentation and studio effects to hold your interest. At times, however, the record just sounds willfully eccentric. But the evening should be a great fashion show—Siouxie's gloom-rock look has been an inspiration to many a punkette. The **DAVE EDMUNDS** Rock 'n' Roll Revue is here on March 15. Edmunds, a man of many talents—producer, songwriter, consummate pub rocker—has assembled such talents as **DION, GRAHAM PARKER,** and **KIM WILSON** (of the Fabulous Thunderbirds). The **RADIATORS** claim March 17. Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

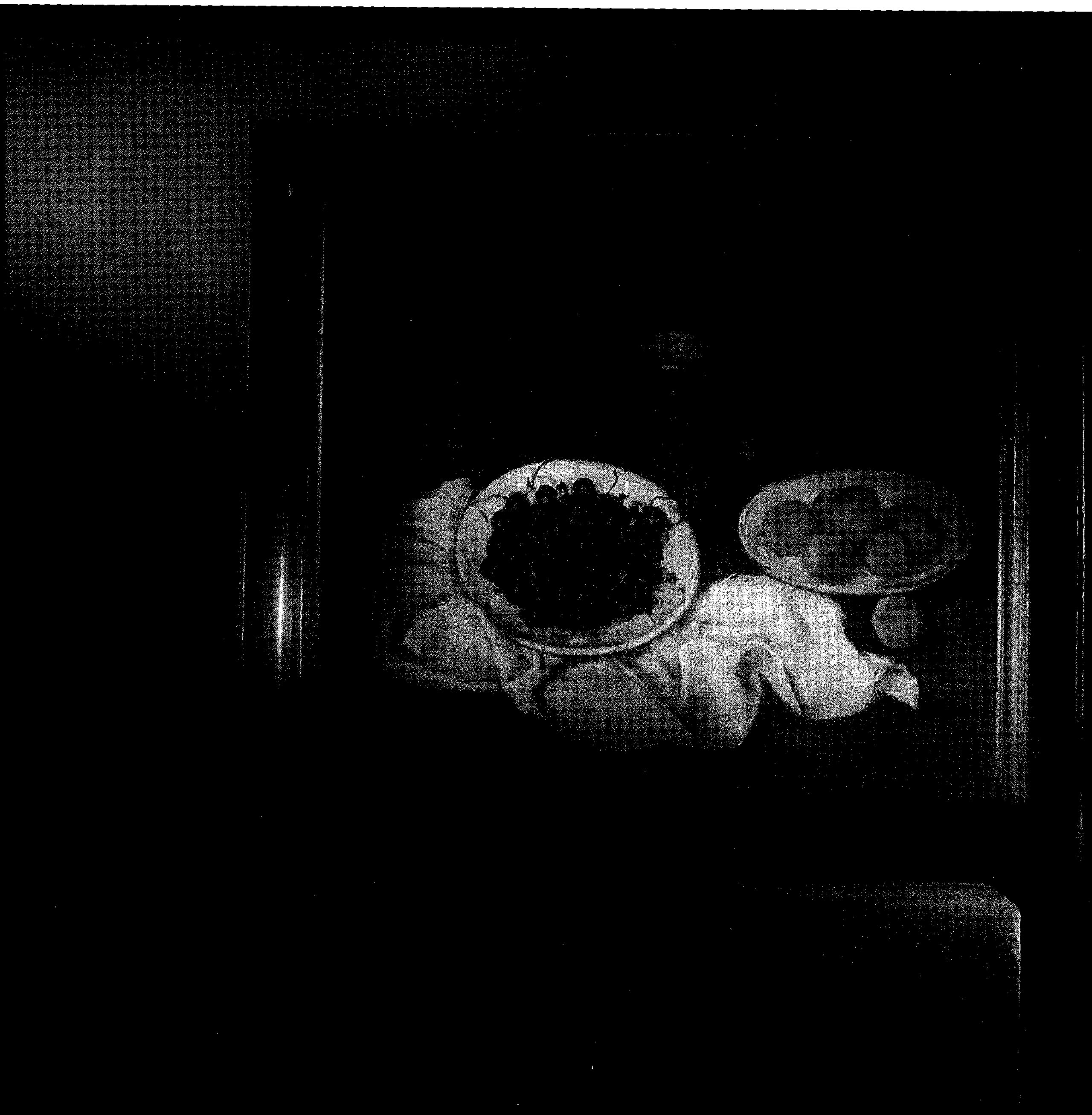
SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—**ART FARMER,** a flugelhorn player known for his spare, eloquent tone, leads a quintet here Tuesdays through Sundays. Miles Evans' big band is in action on Mondays. Shows from ten. Dining.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The late Max Gordon, who opened this jazz shrine in 1935, once described the club's early patrons as a mix of "poets, W.P.A. writers, hustlers, broads on the make, and moochers." Mr. Gordon continued to run the place until his death last year, and always weathered the trials of club ownership with equanimity, whether it was Harry Belafonte's exposed navel (Max didn't approve, but the customers did) or the time Charles Mingus tore off the front door. **DAVID MURRAY,** a veteran of the World Saxophone Quartet, a composer for ensembles large and small, and one wild horn blower, leads a foursome March 13-18. The **NIELS LAN DOKY** quartet pushes off on March 20, with saxophonist **BILL EVANS.** Music after ten.

WETLANDS, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Two floors of no-nuke-veggie entertainment. Listen to bands play in the Summer of Love-muralled back room, buy a tie-dyed T-shirt at the Volkswagen-bus curio shop; catch up on current events at the bulletin board and community calendar. Or, if you'd rather just be mellow, crash out in the basement hippie love pad.

WOODY'S, 82 E. 4th St. (982-3686)—**INNOCENCE MISSION,** which hails from the wilds of Pennsylvania, released its début album not long ago—an exquisite record run through with murmurs of the Cocteau Twins and Kate Bush. The group's style of instrumentation is not unfamiliar—ringing acoustic guitars, airy synthesizers, far-off backing vocals—but singer Karen Peris has a gorgeous, breathy voice, and her faith- and family-centered lyrics have pretty much upended pop's priorities. The group will play here on March 21.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—Many fine musicians pass through this pleasant, peach-toned Italian restaurant and bar, but they're up against stiff odds: the bar scene is often bustling, and the food itself is a major distraction. The guitarist **TAL FARLOW** and the bassist **GARY MAZZAROPPI** work out through March 17; the pianist **PETE MALINVERNI** and the bassist **RAY DRUMMOND** get under way on March 19. Music weeknights from eight and Sundays from seven.



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Paul Cézanne, *Still Life with Cherries and Peaches*, c. 1883–87. Gift of Adele R. Levy Fund and Mr. and Mrs. Armand S. Deutsch. *Vase (The "Lafayette Vase")*, France, c. 1830–35. Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Gilbert. *Official*, China, Tang Dynasty, c. 618–907. Gift of Leon Lidow. LA County Museum of Art.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

EVER read about those swellegant parties in legendary places like the Grand Ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria and wish you were one of the gossip columnists who go to these things and who don't look nearly as good as the photos next to their bylines? Save your envy. True, all the scribes may have written glowingly about the highlight of the American Museum of the Moving Image's Mike Nichols tribute, held recently at the hotel: Meryl Streep's sublime, Carrie Fisher-crafted monologue on every actress's need to be Miked.

But there was lots the societicians didn't mention: encountering a hotel staff that couldn't care less if you ever find your destination ("Where is the Grand Ballroom?" we asked. "Down there," said a uniformed Astorian, pointing toward Lexington Avenue, while standing in the lobby, just off Park); finding out when you get to the ballroom, which is on the *third* floor, that the coatroom is on the *second;* being shoved, on your return upstairs, by fifty photographers who have no use for anyone who hasn't walked in with Goldie Hawn; sitting next to one of the biggest lobbyists along the Washington–New York corridor, who spends the entire evening telling you to save her salad, her entrée, and her dessert, while she schmoozes with anyone who's ever dropped a dime on anything pricier than Girl Scout cookies; facing a chicken pot pie that could be bested in the frozen-food section of any Korean deli, served by a waiter who taps your bracelet with a hot plate to let you know he's behind you; listening to a band that makes the theme from "Working Girl" sound like "Strangers in the Night"; sitting near a well-known actor who shakes onto his salad enough dandruff to masquerade as Parmesan; sighting a Tony winner too soused to make it through the whole bash, as well as a hostess who high-heels four sets of tuxedo slippers on her way up to the lectern without issuing a single apology on the way back; and biting into a brownie so crummy no glass of ice-cold milk could moisten it. Yes, there were film clips. Yes, there were inside jokes. And, yes, there was Elaine May. But that's pretty slim pickings for five hours of endurance. The next time you bemoan the quality of your life, remember that it takes only forty-five seconds to read about this kind of affair. And that most people you know think your photos don't do you justice.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

"Crowbar"—A play, of sorts, presented by En Garde Arts and performed in the old Victory Theatre, which has most recently been a porn-film house. Music by David Van Tieghem. (209 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Tuesdays through Sundays at 8. Through March 25.)

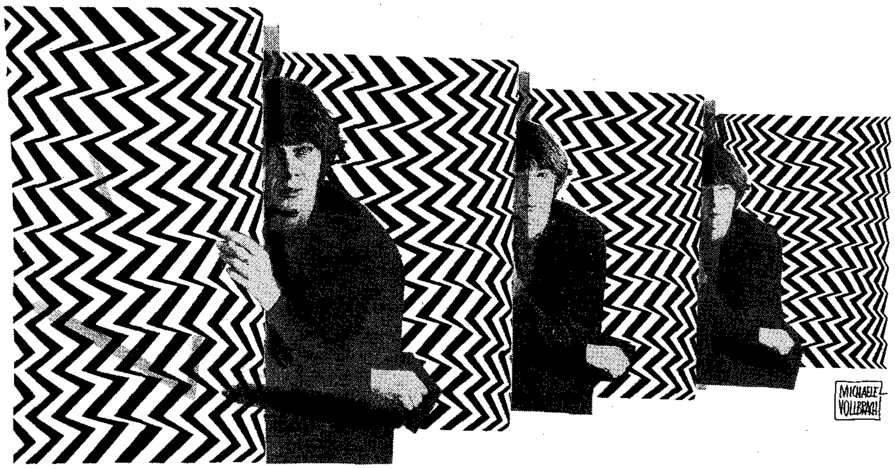
"The Nature of Things"—A theatrical work written and performed by David Cale. Roy Nathanson and Marc Ribot will perform their own score. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 279-4200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 3. Through April 7.)

"Everything That Rises Must Converge"—Seven actors, five video cameras, and a wall get together in John Jesurun's new performance work about language and media. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. March 14-16 and March 18 at 8:30, and March 17 at 8:30 and 10:30.)

"Irrational Fullness"—An improvisational work created by Barbara Chang (a choreographer), Yong Soon Min (a visual artist), and Elliott Sharp (a composer). Each performance features a different group of five dancers and four musicians. (Dia Art Foundation, 155 Mercer St. 505-8015. March 15-18 at 9.)

"Salome"—Sarah Schulman's adaptation of the Oscar Wilde play, with Kimberly Flynn in the title role and Jennifer Miller as John the Baptist. "Psychology," a short work also by Ms. Schulman, is the curtain-raiser. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. March 15-18 at 9:30. Through March 25.)

Sapphire—A local performance artist and writer asking: "Are You Ready to Rock?" (Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671. March 16-17 at 8:30.)



Bridget Riley at Sidney Janis

ART

"NEW SCULPTURE 1965-1975: BETWEEN GEOMETRY AND GESTURE," the new and very new-looking exhibition at the Whitney, is unbelievably glamorous. It's a splendid feather in the abused cap of the museum's director, Tom Armstrong, who was fired last week, and of the show's curators, Richard Marshall and Richard Armstrong. Marvel of cool panache follows marvel of drop-dead elegance—all sprawled in perfect, if at times narcissistic, indolence over two monumental floors. The radical spirit of these earlier works by Alan Saret, Lynda Benglis, Barry LeVa, Keith Sonnier, the late Robert Smithson, Bruce Nauman, Joel Shapiro, Richard Serra, Richard Tuttle, and the late Eva Hesse has apparently evolved into a state of profound and impeccably pomaded art-historical grace. It is not that the many triumphant works here have lost their potency. On the contrary, they now appear seminal. The expressions on several faces at the opening—in particular, those belonging to some of the artists recently underestimated or overlooked, and to their more faithful supporters—suggested that for quite a few people the evening was an occasion for deep, satisfying feelings of accomplishment and vindication, coupled with alternating currents of mortality, regret, and angst. Yikes!

High points of the exhibition—for instance, LeVa's (reconstructed) corner installation of swagged purple-brown felt with broken plate glass (1967), or Sonnier's tough, precocious "Quad-scan," with its citizens-band system (1975), or Benglis's (reconstructed) neoclassical tableau with plastic flowers (1975), or her silvery baroque blobs, or her psychedelic latex river (both 1969)—were revealed as the daring precursors of recent works by artists ranging from Barbara Bloom to the late Robert Mapplethorpe, and from Joel Otterson to Mary Lucier. Yet something had been irrevocably altered. Where was the rawness of yesteryear? The Apollonian principle was in beautifully turned-out attendance, but where was Dionysus? Back in '69? It was as if time itself had by 1990 become a stylist.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Caravaggio": This inspiring exhibition (a golden opportunity to inspect the two "Lute Player"s side by side) includes only five paintings by the great early-Baroque painter; with luck, the show will herald a new era of blockbuster-busters. It documents with clarity Caravaggio's first years in Rome, his interest in genre subjects, and his developing relationship with his first patron, Cardinal del Monte. The Caravaggios are followed by paintings and prints of musicians, fortune-tellers, and cardplayers from the same period, many directly influenced by Caravaggio, ending in symphonic glory with Georges de la Tour's delightful "Fortune Teller." Through April 22. . . . ¶ An exhibition of paintings by Jean-Baptiste Greuze (1725-1805), whose work Diderot once praised as "morality in paint." Through May 6. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

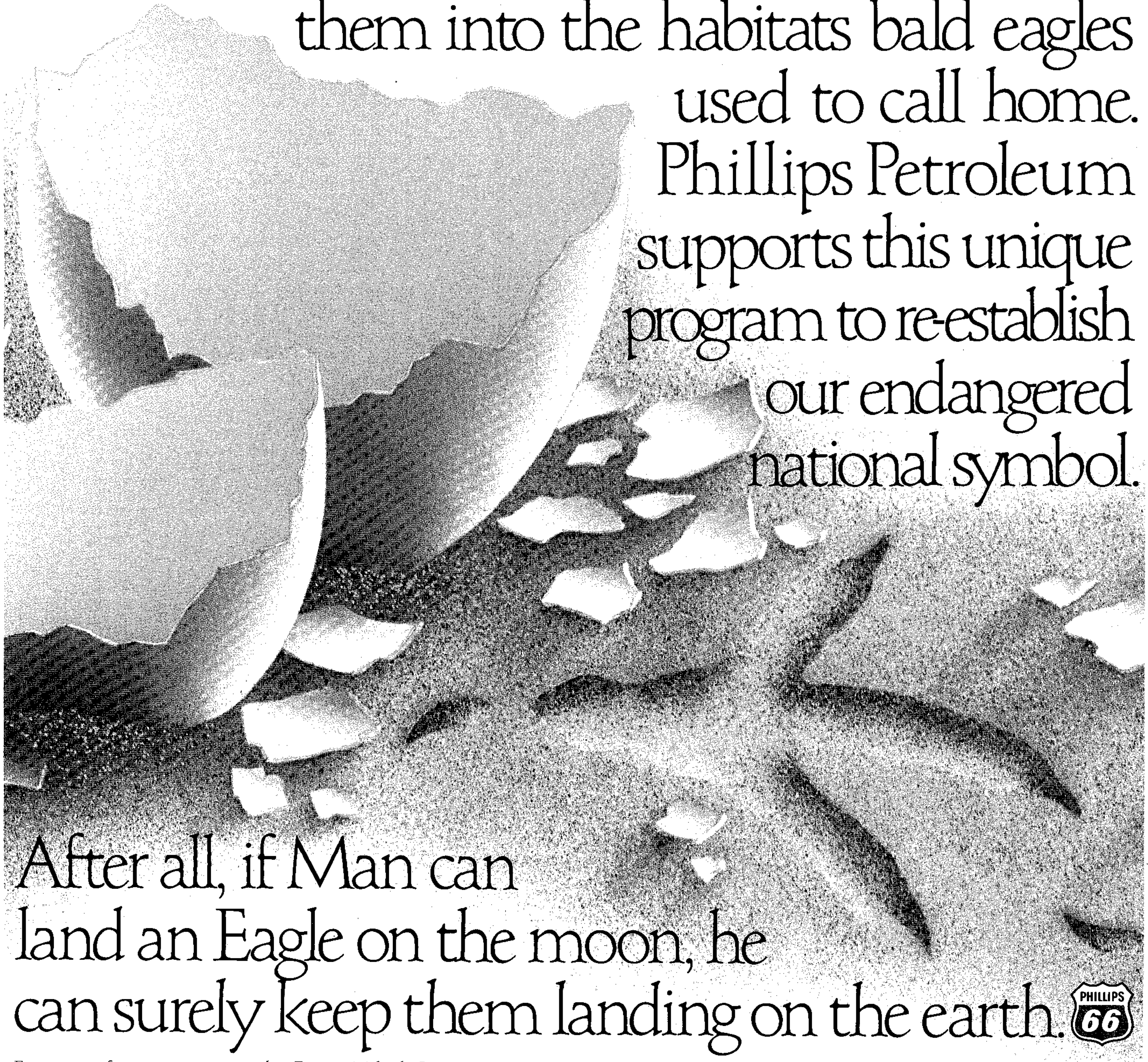
Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—The twist on Robert Moskowitz' brand of minimalist painting is that his central image is usually a representation of something phallic, and subtly so—a skyscraper, a cane, a smokestack. An exhilarating retrospective traces the motif's methodical evolution. Through May 1. . . . ¶ "Photography Until Now," a show of nearly three hundred works, examines the technological, commercial, and creative developments that have shaped the medium over the past century and a half. Through May 29. . . . ¶ Photographs by Tina Barney. Through April 10. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—Before the museum closes to complete restoration, visitors can see about a hundred and fifty paintings and sculptures (by Chagall, Kandinsky, Mondrian, Léger, Calder, Giacometti, and others) from the collection. Through April 29. (Open Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—"New Sculpture 1965-1975: Between Geometry and Gesture." Through May 20. . . . ¶ In the lobby gallery, a small and intense exhibition of recent drawings by

The eagle has landed.

In Oklahoma and Mississippi. Georgia and Alabama. Where few bald eagle nests have produced young in the last 50 years. Using precious eggs and dedicated effort, the Sutton Avian Research Center is successfully raising eaglets from fuzzy to fierce. And releasing them into the habitats bald eagles used to call home. Phillips Petroleum supports this unique program to re-establish our endangered national symbol.



After all, if Man can land an Eagle on the moon, he can surely keep them landing on the earth.

For more information, contact the George Miksch Sutton Avian Research Center, Inc., P.O. Box 2007, Bartlesville, OK 74005, (918) 336-7778.

Roni Horn, Charles Ray, Jim Shaw, and Michael Tetherow. The level of pictorial and conceptual intelligence runs unusually high in this selection. Tetherow's drawings are quite beautiful and Shaw's have an arresting, wistful, yet gonzo humor to them, but Horn's incredibly dense chromatic realizations and Ray's strangely ardent metaphysical paradoxes pack an especially tight, hard punch. Through May 6. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"Czech Modernism 1900-1945": There are some electrifying paintings in this show and a healthy and welcome selection of drawings, prints, and books, all of which give a strong sense of a vital, nearly volcanic exchange of ideas—the artists and painters of Prague seem to have devoured every kind of modern art that came their way. Many of the works are peculiar and occasionally hokey hybrids: Cubo-Expressionism (one fractured fellow knifing another), Expressionistic primitivism (the merger of Munch and Rousseau). Through May 7. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, Broadway at 155th St.—An annual exhibition of paintings and sculptures, this year by thirty-two contemporary artists, eight of whom will receive awards from the Academy-Institute. Among those represented are Ida Applebroog, Milton Resnick, Mel Bochner, and Petah Coyne. Through April 1. (Open daily, except Mondays, 1 to 4.)

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse—An exhibition of paintings that attempts to look at the parallels between artists of African descent in the United States and Brazil, two formerly slave-dependent nations that abolished slavery at roughly the same time. The most moving part of the exhibition is a display of various grotesque iron shackles from Brazil, reproductions of old prints of slaves wearing them, and the startling statistic, printed on a wall label, that six per cent of the African slaves were shipped to the United States and sixty per cent to Brazil. Mel Edwards' "Lynch Fragment" series of sculptures, which are installed nearby, are the richer for this historical material. Through May 28. . . . ¶ A show of Latin-American photography that embraces many different photographic attitudes. Unfortunately, most of the work is derivative and undistinguished. But there is a moving image by Hugo Cifuentes, an Ecuadoran, of a child sleeping on and surrounded by stacks of large photos—each larger than himself—of transport and travel. Through April 10. (Open weekdays, except Fridays, 10 to 4:30; Sundays, 11 to 4:30.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—A show of many ebullient paintings and watercolors by the brilliant and irresistibly charming Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827). Through April 8. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—During Japan's Kamakura period (1185-1333), power shifted from the court to the samurai. In this dramatic installation the court paintings—mostly scrolls with angular portrayals of poets—run down one wall, and swords, gleaming with perfection, run down the opposite wall in a duel for refinement and mastery. Through April 8. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—A loan show from Düsseldorf of works by German artists whose paintings and drawings protested against the First World War and the Weimer Republic. The best known of the artists represented are Otto Dix, Käthe Kollwitz, and Max Ernst. Through May 23. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A show of more than a hundred illuminated manuscripts from fifteenth- and early-sixteenth-century Holland that indicates the influence these works had on later painters. Through May 6. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—Mary Kelly's "Post-Partum Document" is the closest the art world gets to a cult classic. Her newest work, "Interim," continues the earlier piece's critique of traditional gender and class roles, this time through an examination of identity, desire, and desirability in women approaching middle age. The four parts of this environmental, text-centered, post-women's-movement work are visually distinct and distanced. They challenge traditional expectations of how art works should function and are nonauthoritarian and only somewhat seductive. . . . ¶ Jana Sterbak's post-body-art objects have great style—a metal chaise that emits a mild electrostatic shock, for example. Both shows through April 8. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

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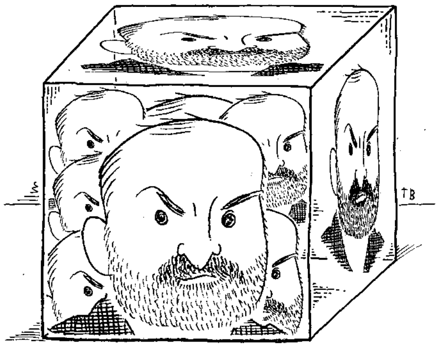
18	19	20	21			

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—Spring training for non-players in a show called "Diamonds Are Forever," which offers the reflections of contemporary authors and artists on that most American of pastimes: baseball. The parks, players, equipment, and action are all immortalized, by fans such as Claes Oldenburg, Edna Ferber, Nicholas Nixon, Roger Angell, Elaine de Kooning, and Andy Warhol. Through April 21. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall. Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 6.)



Arman at Marisa del Re

Queens Museum, Flushing Meadow Park—An exhibition of new British paintings. Through March 18. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5:30.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—A show of contemporary sub-Saharan African art that should inspire serious rethinking of such issues as cultural imperialism and the function of art within a society. Through May 6. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Georg Baselitz—A substantial group of the artist's important, early "Hero Paintings" from the sixties. Baselitz' hero-figure may make you think of Wozzeck the soldier, opera's leading Everyman. In these rich, lean paintings—there is also a beautiful group of prints on the same theme—he undergoes multiple incomplete sex changes and other mortifications of the flesh, and he projects an air of tragicomic fatalism. The spareness and completeness of these works, which are painted in a way that vaguely suggests both Philip Guston and Willem de Kooning, are thrilling. Through April 14. (Werner, 21 E. 67th St.)

Neil Jenney—A no-nonsense display of six industrial-strength paintings by a five-star homeboy. Four are from 1969-70 and are painted in Jenney's bright, brushy, Dick-and-Jane style. They look freshly hatched, as if the artist had discovered a fountain of youth for pigments. The other two—"Atmosphere" and "Morning"—are recent and are placed in solid, Dutch-looking frames. Through March 31. (Mathes, 851 Madison Ave. at 70th St.)

Center for African Art—In yet another provocative exhibition, the Center questions the very value of what we have come to call art work. This time the subject is portraiture, but the show is really about representation in broader terms. Through texts and traditional sculptures in wood, bronze, and other materials, it contrasts the concept of portrayal in African history with those in the West and the East. Through Aug. 12. (54 E. 68th St. Opens at noon on Sundays.)

Group Shows—At **gagosian,** 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.: Joel Shapiro's bronze figure-in-motion—outside on the terrace, as if to welcome spring—is the most dynamic presence in a topflight selection of big-boy sculptures, but John Chamberlain's baroque metal hulk and Richard Serra's perilously precarious balancing act are outstanding as well. Also, sculptures by Walter de Maria, Mark di Suvero, Donald Judd, and Carl Andre, and a painting by Willem de Kooning. Through March 17. . . . **mjs books & graphics,** 9 E. 82nd St.: A display of books that gives ample evidence that the twenties were a golden age in Germany for avant-garde publishing. A rare portfolio of prints by the Hungarian Constructivist Laszlo Peri is a gem, as are many of the great Kurt Schwitters covers (and Dada works by others) on view. Through March 24. (Opens at noon.)

Short List—**hannelore baron,** Schlesinger, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St. (open Mondays, through April 21); **nancy diamond,** Lawrence, 423 E. 81st St. (opens at 1, through March 24); **melvin edwards,** CDS Gallery, 13 E. 75th St. (open Mondays, through March 31); **george grosz,** Soufer, 1015 Madison Ave., at 78th St. (through April 14); **michael heizer,** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (through March 24); **marion kenyon jones,** Urdang, 23 E. 74th St. (through March 31); **paul resika,** Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. (through March 31); **fulvio testa,** Bernard, 33 E. 74th St. (through March 31).

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

Alexander Archipenko (1887-1964)—"The Sculptor as Printmaker," with sculptures and assemblages on view, too. Archipenko seems a bit of a mini-Brancusi in this pleasant but somehow indistinct show. Through March 17. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

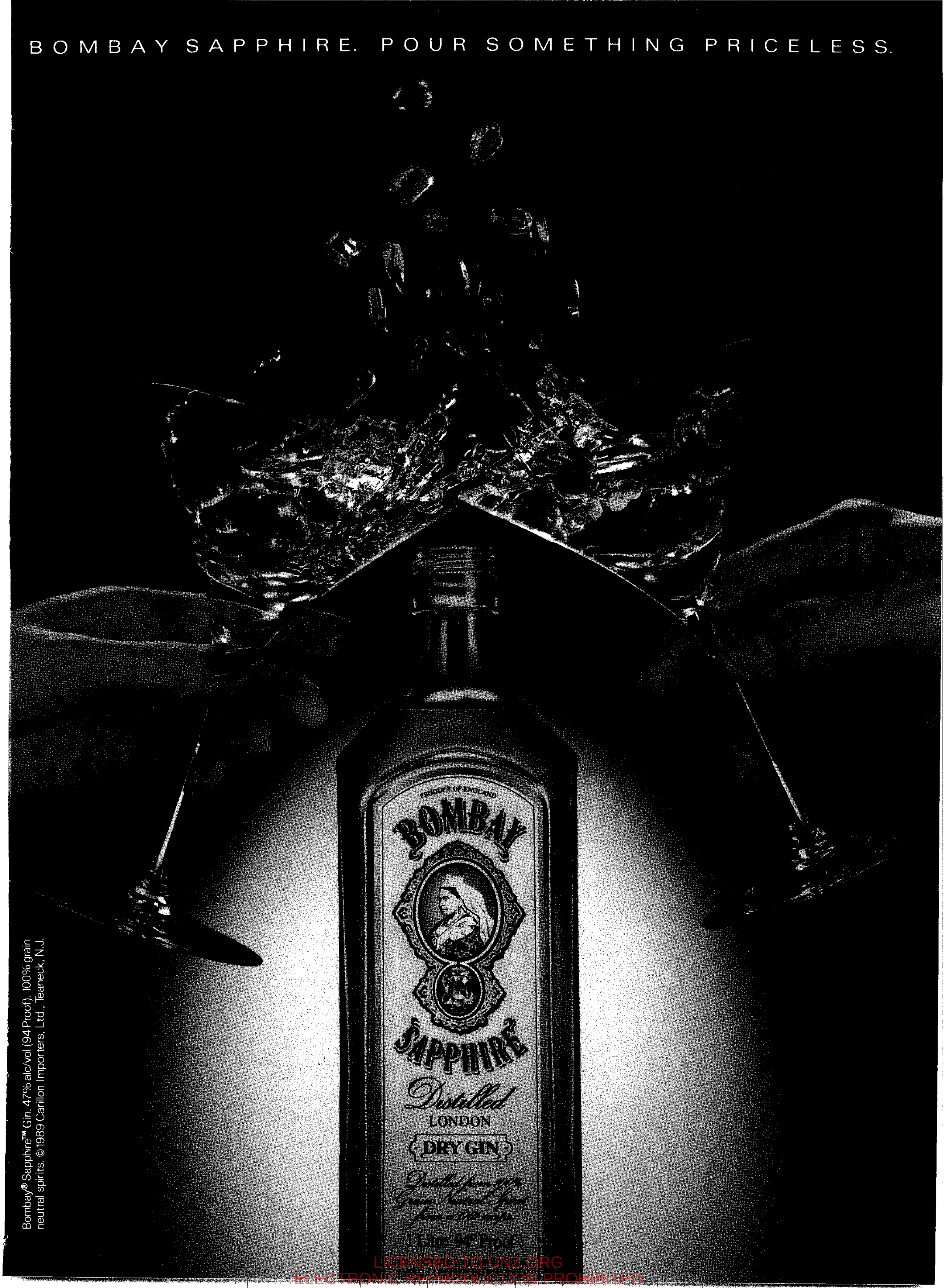
Jim Dine—A big, pompous show of recent works on paper, including a series titled "Glyptotek"—studies of sculptures the artist visited at that German museum—and other assorted figurative themes. Showoffy talent, vulgar emotionalism (signalled here by dreadful splurges of red), and, increasingly, an oppressive and sanctimonious humorlessness have, sadly, become Dine's way. Through March 31. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Llyn Foulkes—Although his work is little known here, this painter made an important contribution to the Pop-art movement in Los Angeles. But now, in true anti-Pop spirit, he has spent five years making the one painting on view here—a shallow-relief assemblage, actually—titled "What's Up Pop?" It's a maniacally obsessive portrait of the artist sitting in his armchair, watching TV, with his gun in his holster, his children standing by, and his eyes bugged out in utter comic horror. The décor is strictly Americana retro-redneck. It's a postwar time vacuum that is intimidatingly intense and fascinating, but also somewhat off-putting. Through March 31. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

Izhar Patkin / Elsa Rady—The centerpiece is a wax sculpture of a mythological musical group, inspired by Sicilian grotesques and arranged in a composition borrowed from Bernini's "Ecstasy of St. Teresa." / Lovely porcelain vessels that are an amalgam of all the best characteristics of ceramics from the fifties. Through March 17. (Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Michael Tetherow—Strange, beautiful acrylic paintings of faint, spidery, sexually loaded lines and intense color stains—rich material for a Freudian. Through March 31. (McCoy, 41 E. 57th St.)

James Valerio—Large realistic paintings that are mostly overstaged, tricky iconographic displays. An exception is a portrayal of a mid-lifer (the artist) and his dreamy female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companion bathed in magnificently rendered greenery. From afar the paintings look like brightly lit Photo-Realism; only up close do we see evidence of a master with the brush. Through March 30. (Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St.)

"Graphic Design in America"—From Coke bottles and Ritz-cracker boxes, to M & Co.'s eighties album designs for the Talking Heads and menu designs for the restaurant Florent, with Knoll furniture ads and I.R.S. tax forms in between—this exhibition offers a clean sweep of its subject. Of course it's interesting, and bound to be a crowd pleaser, but it's too tidy—like a report. Through April 7. (IBM Gallery, Madison Ave. at 56th St.)

Short List—**ARMAN,** Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St. (though March 31); **RONALD BLADEN,** Washburn, 41 E. 57th St. (through April 7); **SQUEAK CARNWATH,** Shea & Beker, 20 W. 57th St. (through March 31); **JOHN DIGBY,** Suzuki, 24 W. 57th St. (opens at 11:30, through March 24); **JANE FREILICHER,** Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. (through March 28); **HERBERT KATZMAN,** Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St. (through March 31); **MINORU KAWABATA,** Tilton, 24 W. 57th St. (through March 28); **ROBERT LAHOTAN,** Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through March 28); **LOREN MADSEN,** McKee, 41 E. 57th St. (through March 17); **JOAN NELSON** and **EDWARD RUSCHA,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through March 31); **KATHERINE PORTER** (through March 31), and **ROBERTO CARACCIOLO** (through March 24), Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.; **BRIDGET RILEY,** Janis, 110 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through March 24); **JOSÉ MARÍA SICILIA,** Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (through March 17); **MITCHELL SIPORIN,** Babcock, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through April 3); **ANTONI TAPIES,** Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (through March 23); **ROBIN UTTERBACK,** de Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. (through March 28); **LAWRENCE WEINER,** Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through March 31).

GALLERIES—SoHo

Jay Coogan—Small bronze sculptures of plantlike figures, with sausage legs and mushroom shields, in theatrical or burdensome poses—witty, but classically kitsch. Through March 24. (Helander, 415 West Broadway.)

Walter Dahn—An exceptionally good show of recent paintings and vitrine sculptures by a mercurial young German artist. In the two-dimensional works, paint, pigment, and silkscreened images from a variety of sources, including Alfred Jarry and the great Mexican satirist Posada, meet on canvas to create strange, plangently beautiful little odes on the poetic grotesque. Through March 24. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

Jane Dickson—New paintings and drawings that evoke the haunted city-street realism of a nineteen-thirties artist such as O. Louis Guglielmi. Dickson's signature device, evident in many of her stronger works, is an oddly angled overhead perspective—basically a second-story view of pedestrians—that contributes generously to these pictures' sustained atmosphere of anxiety. The paintings are somewhat suppressed-looking and static, but the drawings have a daredevil ease and simplicity. Through March 28. (Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

General Idea—A dramatic and engaging installation work that is the collaborative trio's latest self-portrait. It consists of three taxidermic baby seals adrift on a sea of Styrofoam-like icebergs, and it is loaded with witty contradictions and timely references, most having to do with various types of survival of the fittest. The work's fractured white-on-white field becomes a pun on white-on-white modernist painting. All in all, the ostensibly endangered seals are a curious and revealing image coming after the group's AIDS projects. Through March 24. (Koury Wingate, 578 Broadway.)

Robert Goodnough—A fresh, startling, and spectacular show of paintings from 1965. All consist of same-size circles in basic colors, but the artist has managed to create a variation in which each work recalls the painting of a different artist; at the same time, the pieces never seem derivative. Through March 17. (Greenberg Wilson, 560 Broadway.)

Keith Haring (1958-90) **and William Burroughs**—This unfortunately timely exhibition displays two collaborative print editions. Haring came up with simple line etchings of surprisingly unstylized Expressionism to illustrate handwritten texts from Burroughs' "The Valley," a story about isolation, disease, and quarantine. The images are striking and tender. The artist's economy of line matches the writer's lean prose. Through March 17. (Lucien, 555 Broadway.)

Ralph Humphrey—Honest, handsome, forthright abstractions, at home in a cementlike impasto. For many people this artist's work has been a long-running, low-intensity affair of the heart. This is admirable, considered stuff—lately, it's been looking good, too—but its literalness makes some people a little restive. Through March 31. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Will Insley—These old-fashioned grid paintings were made with a regularized Impressionistic technique. The brushwork brings depth to the pieces, which the grid short-circuits. An early painting on view indicates that these are part of an ongoing enterprise to depict the artist's "one city." The works are very pretty, if a bit stiff, and more interesting than engaging. Through March 24. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

Win Knowlton—Rough concrete sculptures that are much more appealing than the artist's better-known, slick, sleek-surfaced ones. Most of the new pieces play with balance—a chair that has fallen on its rocklike head, for instance. Some have metal reinforcing rods jutting out of them, forming a kind of drawing in air. There's a certain dumbness to the materials, but for the most part the forced primitivism has paid off. Through March 24. (Blum Helman Warehouse, 80 Greene St.)

Allan McCollum—This artist's newest work is stunning: more than two thousand symmetrical, Rorschach-like drawings from a series that could stretch into the billions, crammed on the walls and on tables in the Weber gallery, which temporarily looks more like Ye Olde Print Shop. McCollum has come up with cogent images for questioning the nature of content in art, and his works are beautifully crafted, never sliding into *épater-les-bourgeois* cynicism. Through March 24. (142 Greene St.) . . . ¶ Some new and beautiful versions of the plaster paintings that established the artist's career. Through March 17. (Pretto, 251 Sixth Ave., at Houston St. Opens at 1.)

Charlotte Moorman—This avant-garde cellist, known for performing in various stages of undress, is more than a muse for Nam June Paik. Her show includes the legendary "T.V. Bra," collaborations with Joseph Beuys and John Cage, as well as original sculptures, which are not as interesting as the videotapes, documents, and functioning instruments themselves. Also included: David Dinkins' certificate declaring January 11, 1989, Charlotte Moorman Day—a piece in itself. Through March 17. (Harvey, 537 Broadway.)

Bruce Nauman—After more than twenty years of making some of the most interesting art around, Bruce Nauman has finally been discovered by the New York art market. The best of his current three shows features his newest multi-monitor video work—a deadpan, mesmerizing examination of childhood teachings, aped behavior, and fantasy, using a mime and Simon-says instructions. Through March 24. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.) . . . ¶ Large wax sculptures, most of them suspended, representing partially dismembered animal carcasses that have been stuck together—particularly powerful portrayals of mutilation. Also, waxes of heads, some with their tongues sticking out, which are especially haunting. Through March 31. (Castelli, 420 West Broadway, and 65 Thompson Street Gallery.)

Carl Ostendorp—An engaging New York début by an abstract painter. The large monochromatic paintings look as if they were done with a huge stream of colored shaving cream that was sprayed and dripped and has hardened. The smaller ones look like pebbly residue from the side of the road that has been covered in colored epoxy; they are both straightforward and coy. Through March 31. (Wolff, 560 Broadway.)

Peter Plagens—White paintings with drips, by the art critic. Through March 28. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Christy Rupp—The inner city and ecology have long been this artist's interwoven themes, and her style until now has stressed the charm of a certain abjectness. These new, rather sleek metal open structures outline natural forms, such as shells, mollusks, a leaping dolphin, and a tree trunk, and are filled with tasteful-looking garbage—mainly pastel plastic soda bottles and empty cat-food cans. They represent a technical breakthrough for the formerly funky Rupp. Teasing allusions to Frank Gehry's fishlamps, or to Justen Ladda's tidal wave of detergent boxes (after Hokusai), also denote a spirit of healthy competition and fun. But these works somehow seem a little pat. Through March 17. (P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway.)

Maura Sheehan—These new environmental sculptures, collectively titled "Insulation," are an assortment of tents, tepees, and beach cabañas created by brilliantly swagging large sheets of aluminum-foil-like material onto light, efficient structures of metal tubing—a technical upgrade for Sheehan. Through March 31. (Facchetti, 476 Broadway.)

Meyer Vaisman—This ringleader of Neo-Geo has come up with highly entertaining white-collar roguery in his newest works: faux Gobelin tapestries—actually printed in Paris on tapestry stock—of medieval Netherlandish narratives into which bellowing Disneyesque cartoon characters have been inserted. These works are charged by a more baroque and power-centered nose-thumbing than was found in the artist's previous work. In some tapestries the imagery is incredibly rich though somewhat hidden. Through March 24. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

Ursula von Rydingsvard—A powerful exhibition of heavy wood sculptures with figurative references—a mature vision operating at full force. Through March 31. (Lorence-Monk, 578 Broadway.)

Peter Voulkos—The newest plates and vessels by this central figure in California ceramics during the fifties and sixties are aggressively primitive, macho, and dull. Through March 24. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

Matthew Weinstein—Small paintings that have an O'Keeffe-Dove aura, and large ones that are uncreative erotic dreams in Peter Max colors—dreams of Elizabeth Murray, with Judy Chicago flash. Through March 17. (Postmasters, 80 Greene St.)

Short List—**JONATHAN BOROFSKY,** Cooper, 155 Wooster St. (through March 28); **PAUL BRACH,** Steinbaum, 132 Greene St. (through April 3); **NEIL CAMPBELL,** Rosen, 130 Prince St. (through April 7); **MARTIN KIPPENBERGER,** Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St. (through April 7); **GARY LANG,** Nosei, 100 Prince St. (through March 21); **DONALD LIPSKI,** Lennon, Weinberg, 580 Broadway (through March 31), and Kasmin, 580 Broadway (through April 7); **ANN MESSNER,** Fawbush, 568 Broadway (through April 5); **JOSEPH SANTORE,** Thorp, 103 Prince St. (through April 14); **HAN SCHUIL,** Germans van Eck, 420 West Broadway (through March 24); **MARIANNE STIKAS,** Davis, 568 Broadway (through March 31); **DOROTHEA TANNING,** Nahan Contemporary, 380 West Broadway (through March 31); **MARK TANSEY,** Marcus, 578 Broadway (through March 31).

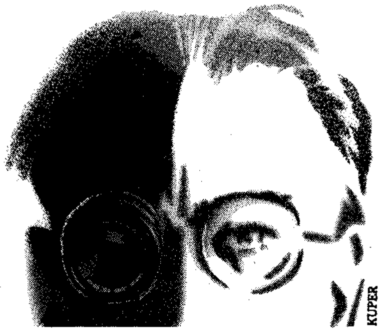
OTHER GALLERIES

Richmond Burton—A formally elegant and intellectually savvy show of recent geometric and neo-mimimalist paintings—several works play on early-Stella motifs—by a young artist who knows how to joust with precedent, not in order to kill it or codify it but to animate it with the fervor of new authorship. Clearly an adept. Through March 17. (Watson, 241 Lafayette St.)

Leon Golub—Cartoonish portraits of world political figures that show the artist at his incisive and subversive best. From Kissinger to Castro, Franco to Sihanouk, these small acrylic paintings from the seventies insist on looking like toss-offs. They are anything but. Through March 17. (Baer, 270 Lafayette St.)

Florine Stettheimer (1871-1944)—A rare, delicious chance to see a substantial group of paintings, all from the Columbia University Collection, by an artist to whom the epithets iron butterfly, hothouse flower, Proustian flapper, and great American original might equally apply. Homemade tarot cards and childhood notebooks are also on view, in vitrines. Through March 31. (Wallach Art Gallery, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 5.)

Short List—***LUCIO POZZI,*** Bromm, 90 West Broadway (open Mondays, closed Saturdays, through April 30); **GERHARD RICHTER,** Grey Art Gallery, New York University, 33 Washington Pl. (through April 21); **JAMES TURNBULL,** Sragow, 67-73 Spring St. (Mondays through Fridays, 1 to 6, through April 14).



MOMA's John Szarkowski

PHOTOGRAPHY

WE never could understand why people groan at the idea of home slide shows. We love them, as we do family photo albums. In fact, we prefer seeing pictures of weddings, vacations, and other auspicious occasions to attending them. So Tina Barney's photographs have always appealed to our vicarious interest in the stories these kinds of personal pictures can tell. Barney's work looks spontaneous but is, in fact, choreographed, and her scenes of domesticity, of familial set-ups, and of Waspy social life are on to something profound about the dynamics, habits, and possessions that weave people together and also keep them apart. Her current exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art includes photographs that reveal as much about upper-middle-class life today as Vuillard's paintings of domestic scenes of the bourgeoisie did in their time. Barney can be contrived, as is clear from a picture of two older women that makes too much of the fact that their dresses are similarly patterned. But when she embraces complexity, as in a pink bedroom scene complete with the princesses of the house and their black maid, Barney is a photographer whose sense of sensuality and plot stands out.

"Photography Until Now"—Curated by John Szarkowski, this show of nearly three hundred works examines the technological, commercial, and creative developments that have shaped the medium over the past century and a half. Through May 29. (Museum of Modern Art.)

Czech Modernism: 1900-1945—A show of a hundred and eighty-five black-and-white photographs, in conjunction with the exhibition of paintings, sculptures, and works on paper at the Brooklyn Museum. Through May 13. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

"The Indomitable Spirit"—Most of the ninety-four artists represented (among them Barbara Kruger, Louise Lawler, and Andres Serrano) have created works specifically for this show—a photographic response to AIDS. Through April 7. (International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

Short List—**DAWOUD BEY,** Ledel, 168 Mercer St. (opens Wednesdays through Saturdays at noon, through April 28); **CLEGG & GUTTMANN,** Gorney, 100 Greene St. (through April 7); **ROY DECARAVA,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway (opens at noon on Saturdays, through April 7); **ARTHUR LEIPZIG,** Photofind, 138 Spring St. (through March 17); **ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE,** Martina Hamilton, 19 E. 71st St. (through March 31); **WILLIAM WEGMAN** and **VICTOR SCHRAGER,** Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (through March 24).

MUSIC

THE African-American religious songs that have come to be known as spirituals constitute one of the richest bodies of folk music. The arrangement of this music for concert use is a special genre that has flourished in the twentieth century in conjunction with the emergence of important black American concert singers. The key figures among performers were Roland Hayes, Paul Robeson, and Marian Anderson; among arrangers, H. T. Burleigh (who as a music student copied the parts for the première of Dvořák's "New World Symphony," and who sang into his eighties as baritone soloist of St. George's Church in New York), Lawrence Brown (who was Robeson's longtime accompanist), Hall Johnson (whose once famous choir appeared in "The Green Pastures"), and Hayes himself. All these people were born in the short span from 1866 (Burleigh) to 1899 (Anderson, whose generally acknowledged birth date of 1902 is apparently inaccurate). Black musicians of that generation did not have available to them normal careers in composition or on the operatic stage, but they created a repertory and a performing tradition that have served magnificently for their more fortunate successors.

Most black singers in the "classical" world close their recitals with spirituals, and it is easy to see why; not even the folk-song arrangements of Bartók, Brahms, and Britten have held up as well as the work of Burleigh, Brown, Johnson, and a few others. And the continuity of the performing tradition is stirringly apparent from recordings of Anderson, Robeson, and Hayes, through Charles Holland and Dorothy Maynor, and down to the performances of singers such as Leontyne Price, Florence Quivar, Shirley Verrett, Jessye Norman, and Kathleen Battle. The latter two are joining forces for a Carnegie Hall concert of spirituals on the afternoon of the 18th; it should be a special event. We note with some disappointment that the accompaniments are to be for orchestra, choir, and organ; the piano arrangements are classics and are full of character. But we are happy to see that several of the arrangements are at least to be based on those of Burleigh and Johnson.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—**OTELLO,** with Katia Ricciarelli, Placido Domingo, Barry McCauley, and Justino Díaz; conducted by Carlos Kleiber. (March 12, March 16, and March 19, all at 8.) . . . **MANON LESCAUT,** with Mirella Freni, Peter Dvorsky, Brian Schexnayder, and Italo Tajo; Nello Santi. (March 13 at 8 and March 17 at 1:30.) . . . **FAUST,** a new production, with Ashley Putnam, Francisco Araiza, Gino Quilico, and James Morris; Charles Dutoit. (March 14 and March 17 at 8.) . . . With Barbara Daniels, Neil Shicoff, Gino Quilico, and Michael Devlin; Charles Dutoit. (March 20 at 8.) . . . **DIE ENTFÜHRUNG AUS DEM SERAIL,** with Mariella Devia, Barbara Kilduff, Deon van der Walt, and Lars Magnusson; James Levine. (March 15 at 8.) . . . With Mariella Devia, Erie Mills, Uwe Heilmann, and Lars Magnusson; James Levine. (March 21 at 8.)

"La Finta Giardiniera"—Brussels' Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie presenting the Mozart opera; Sylvain Cambreling conducting. With Joanna Kozlowska and Malvina Major, sopranos; and Ugo Benelli and Marek Torzewski, tenors. (Majestic Theatre, 651 Fulton St., about a block east of Flatbush Ave., Brooklyn. 1-718 636-4100. March 15 and March 17 at 7, and March 19 at 7:30.)

Amato Opera Company—A new production of Verdi's "Un Ballo in Maschera." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. March 17 at 7:30 and March 18 at 2:30.)

John Brownlee Opera Theatre—Kurt Klippstatter conducting Emmerich Kálmán's "Countess Maritza." The operetta will be sung in German, and the dialogue spoken in English. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. March 21 and March 23 at 8, and March 25 at 2:30. Tickets at the door on the nights of the concerts.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall, Zdenek Macal conducting works by Smetana, Dvořák, and Janáček. (March 15 at 8, March 16 at 2, March 17 at 8, and March 20 at 7:30.)

Philadelphia Orchestra—Erich Leinsdorf conducting, among other works, Davidovsky's "Concertante for String Quartet and Orchestra," with the Guarneri Quartet. (Carnegie Hall. March 13 at 8.)

Boston Symphony—Neeme Järvi conducting a program of compositions by Mozart and Sibelius. With Anne-Sophie Mutter, violin. (Carnegie Hall. March 14-15 at 8.)

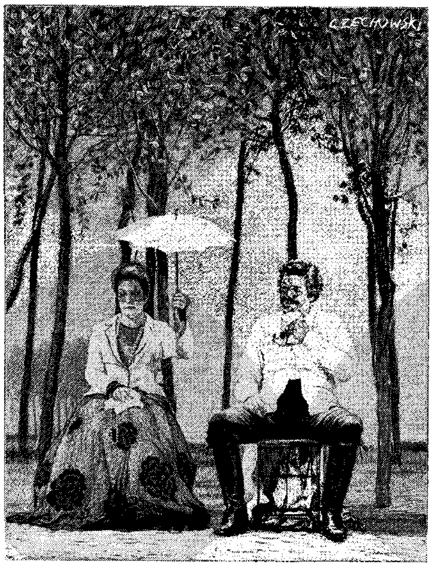
Hunter Symphony—André Watts is the piano soloist in a benefit concert, conducted by Clayton Westermann. (Hunter College Auditorium, Park Ave. at 69th St. 772-4448. March 14 at 7.)

Beethovenhalle Orchestra of Bonn—Dennis Russell Davies conducting. March 16 at 8: Works by Schumann, Strauss, and Prokofiev. With Heinz Holliger, oboe. (Carnegie Hall.) . . . ¶ March 18 at 3: Beethoven's "Emperor Concerto," among other works. With Alexander Toradze, piano. (Avery Fisher Hall.)

New York Chamber Symphony—John Gibbons will be conducting and playing the harpsichord in an all-Bach program. With D'Anna Fortunato, mezzo-soprano; Syoki Aki, violin; and Judith Mendenhall, flute. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. March 17 at 8.)

Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra—Jesús López-Cobos conducting. With Alicia de Larrocha, piano. (Carnegie Hall. March 19 at 8.)

Orchestre National de France—Lorin Maazel conducting. With Hildegard Behrens, soprano. (Carnegie Hall. March 22 at 8.)



At BAM, Malvina Major and Ugo Benelli in "La Finta Giardiniera"

Florilegium Chamber Choir and Orchestra—JoAnn Rice directing a program of works sung in Hebrew. With Walter Hilse, organ; and Nathaniel Wilson and Kenneth Cohen, tenors. (Park Avenue Christian Church, Park Ave. at 85th St. March 18 at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

Dessoff Choirs—Amy Kaiser directing. (Merkin Concert Hall. March 18 at 8.)

Oratorio Society of New York—Lyndon Woodside directing Beethoven's "Missa Solemnis." With Brenda Harris, soprano; Rebecca Russell, mezzo-soprano; Carl Halvorson, tenor; and Richard Zeller, baritone. (Carnegie Hall. March 21 at 8.)

RECITALS

Guarneri Quartet—Playing works by Haydn, Schumann, and Schubert. (Alice Tully Hall. March 14 at 8.) . . . ¶ Playing music by Mozart, Kodály, and Mendelssohn. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. March 17 at 8.)

New York Woodwind Quintet—With Robert Levin, piano. (Merkin Concert Hall. March 14 at 8.)

Joel Krosnick and Gilbert Kalish—Cello and piano. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. March 15 at 8.)

Russell Sherman—Piano, in an all-Schumann program. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. March 15 at 8.)

Florence Quivar—Mezzo-soprano. (Weill Recital Hall. March 16 at 8.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—Playing octets by Schubert and Gunther Schuller. With James Buswell and Stephanie Sant'Ambrogio, violin; Chris Millard, bassoon; Lewis Paer, contrabass; and artists of the society. (Alice Tully Hall. March 16 at 8, March 17 at 2, and March 18 at 5.)

Early Music Ensemble—In a program of motets, carols, and pilgrims' songs. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. 662-2133. March 17 at 8.)

Melos String Quartet—Playing works by Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Brahms. (Alice Tully Hall. March 18 at 2.)

Mendelssohn String Quartet—Playing works by Haydn, Beethoven, and Debussy. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. March 18 at 2. Tickets at the door on the day of the performance.)

Kathleen Battle and Jessye Norman—Sopranos, in a program of spirituals. With conductor James Levine, and an orchestra and chorus. (Carnegie Hall. March 18 at 3.)

Shura Cherkassky—Piano, in a benefit performance. (Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. March 18 at 3. For information about tickets, call 749-2802.)

Tashi—A chamber ensemble that includes Richard Stoltzman, clarinet; Ida Kavafian, violin; and Fred Sherry, cello. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. March 18 at 5.)

Arminda Canteros—Piano. (Alice Tully Hall. March 18 at 8.)

Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio—With Harold Wright, clarinet, and David Jolley, horn. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. March 20-21 at 8.)

Christa Ludwig—Mezzo-soprano, singing Schubert's "Die Winterreise." With James Levine, piano. (Carnegie Hall. March 20 at 8.)

Abbey Simon—Piano. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. March 20 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

JAZZ / POP / ROCK
PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Janet Jackson—"I've always wanted an identity of my own," she said recently. "That's the reason I did the 'Control' album on my own, and this record ['Rhythm Nation'] on my own." Well, not quite. You-know-who's little sister had acted in sitcoms and made a couple of dismissable albums before Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis, two of Minneapolis's best songwriters and producers, became her Svengalis and crafted her two blockbuster records. Her popular videos were directed by the best in the business, and Paula Abdul was one of her choreographers. Jackson is, apparently, shy and sweet, yet she seems manufactured, fake. On her new album, the swinging nasty girl has turned into a socially conscious woman, and her music has stiffened into what sounds like a Fascist groove thing (the uniforms and unison dancing in her latest videos don't help, either). This is her first tour ever, and chances are it will be a video and choreographic spectacular. (Madison Square Garden. 563-8300. March 15-16 at 8.)

Janet Jackson

The Pogues—The rumored excesses of this rollicking, everything-but-the-kitchen-sink band may alarm even its staunchest fans, but the Pogues are still a tight outfit, tearing the pubs apart. A heavy-drinkin', heavy-slammin' crowd will gather to do some wild jigs and listen to leader Shane MacGowan's tales of Irish immigrants and urban decay. Lately, MacGowan's voice has deteriorated to such a degree that other members of the band have had to take up the slack—a development that has widened their musical palette. "Peace and Love," the group's latest album, is as diverse, lovely, and adventurous a record as they have ever done, and it should play beautifully live. (Palladium, 126 E. 14th St. 473-7171. March 16 at 8:30.)

Muhal Richard Abrams and Roscoe Mitchell—Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. March 15 at 8.

New Kids on the Block—Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 422-9222. March 15-16 at 7.

Milt Hinton—With an ensemble, in an eightieth-birthday celebration. New School, 66 W. 12th St. March 16 at 6. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.

The Chieftains—Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. March 16 at 8.

Doris Lessing at Symphony Space

John Cale and Bob Neuwirth—St. Ann's Church, 157 Montague St., Brooklyn. 1-718 858-2424. March 16-17 at 8.

"That's What Friends Are For"—A benefit concert, with Eurythmics, Whitney Houston, Milli Vanilli, Lisa Stansfield, Dionne Warwick, and others. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. March 17 at 7.)

"New Sounds"—Presenting Stephen Scott and the Bowed Piano Ensemble, the Modern Mandolin Quartet, and Briane Keane & Faruk Tekbilek. (Merkin Concert Hall. March 18 at 3.)

Kirk Nurock—With Marty Ehrlich. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. March 20 at 8.)

Roulette—March 15: Shamanistics. . . . ¶ March 16: Joshua Fried, Iris Rose, and others. . . . ¶ March 17: Phill Niblock. . . . ¶ March 18: The Schanzer-Speach duo, a husband-and-wife team. (228 West Broadway. 219-8242. Evenings at 9.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Rangers—Vs. the Los Angeles Kings, March 12. . . . ¶ Vs. the Vancouver Canucks, March 18. . . . ¶ Vs. the Toronto Maple Leafs, March 21. (Game time, 7:30.)

Islanders—Vs. the Montreal Canadiens, March 13 at 7:35. . . . ¶ Vs. the Rangers, March 17 at 2:05. . . . ¶ Vs. the Pittsburgh Penguins, March 18 at 2:05.

Devils—Vs. the Philadelphia Flyers, March 20 at 7:45.

Knicks—Vs. the Chicago Bulls, March 13. . . . ¶ Vs. the Milwaukee Bucks, March 17. . . . ¶ Vs. the Orlando Magic, March 20. (Game time, 7:30.)

Nets—Vs. the Milwaukee Bucks, March 12. . . . ¶ Vs. the Philadelphia 76ers, March 19. (Game time, 7:30.)

(The Devils and the Nets play at the Meadowlands, 1-201 935-3900; the Rangers and the Knicks play at Madison Square Garden, 563-8300; and the Islanders play at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 422-9222.)

RACING

Horses—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. . . . **trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights, except Wednesdays, at 8 and Tuesdays at 1. . . . ¶ At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

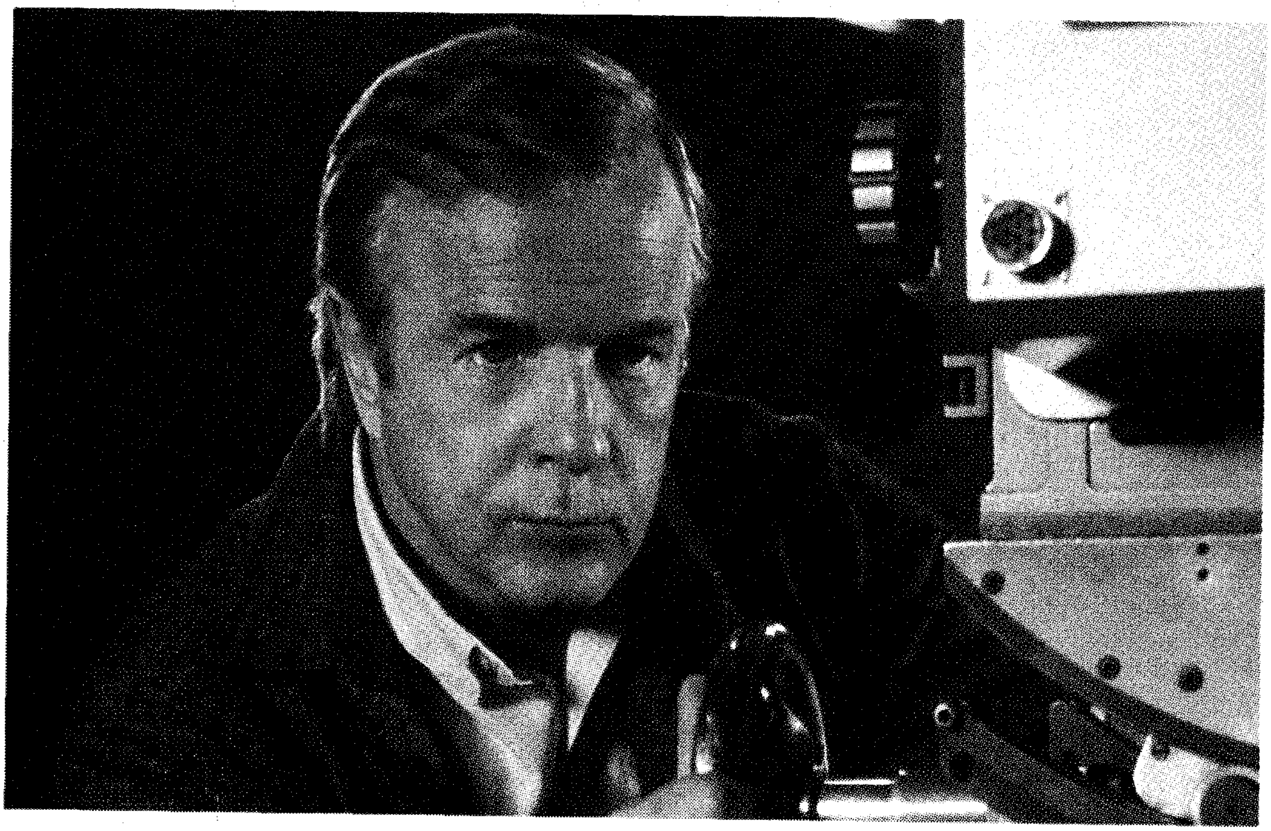
93.9 FM—March 12 marks the début of "New York Cabaret Nights," a twenty-six-week radio show devoted to live cabaret performances. The show, which will be broadcast at seven o'clock from such dreamy venues as the Oak Room and Rainbow & Stars, will be hosted by singer, pianist, and Noël-and-Cole aficionado Steve Ross. On March 19, Mr. Ross will present singer Andrea Marcovicci. For information about tickets to the broadcasts, call 669-7716.

Czech-Off—Two literary getting-to-know-yous: March 19 at 2, a conversation with Czech and American writers, including Jan Pelc, Petr Placák, Kathy Acker, Michael Collier, and Gary Indiana. The same day, at 3:45, a panel discussion about translation, with Galway Kinnell, Zdeněk Urbanek, and others. (Loeb Student Center Auditorium, New York University, Washington Sq. and LaGuardia Pl. No tickets necessary.)

Allen Ginsberg—Presenting his musical adaptations of Blake's poetry. With Steven Taylor, guitar, and Heather Hardy, violin. (St. Marks In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. March 18 at 7. Tickets at the door on the night of the performance.) . . . ¶ In a discussion with composer Philip Glass. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. March 13 at 8.)

Readings—Doris Lessing will be present for an evening of short stories (which she selected) read by Nancy Marchand, Paul Hecht, Josef Sommer, and Maria Tucci. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. March 14 at 6:30.) . . . ¶ Emily Grosholz, David Lehman, and Cynthia Zarin reading their poetry. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. March 13 at 8:15.)

Memorandums—At 11:30 on March 17, the St. Patrick's Day Parade—the world's largest parade without tanks, some say—heads uptown from Fifth Ave. and 44th St. . . . ¶ The first day of spring is March 20.



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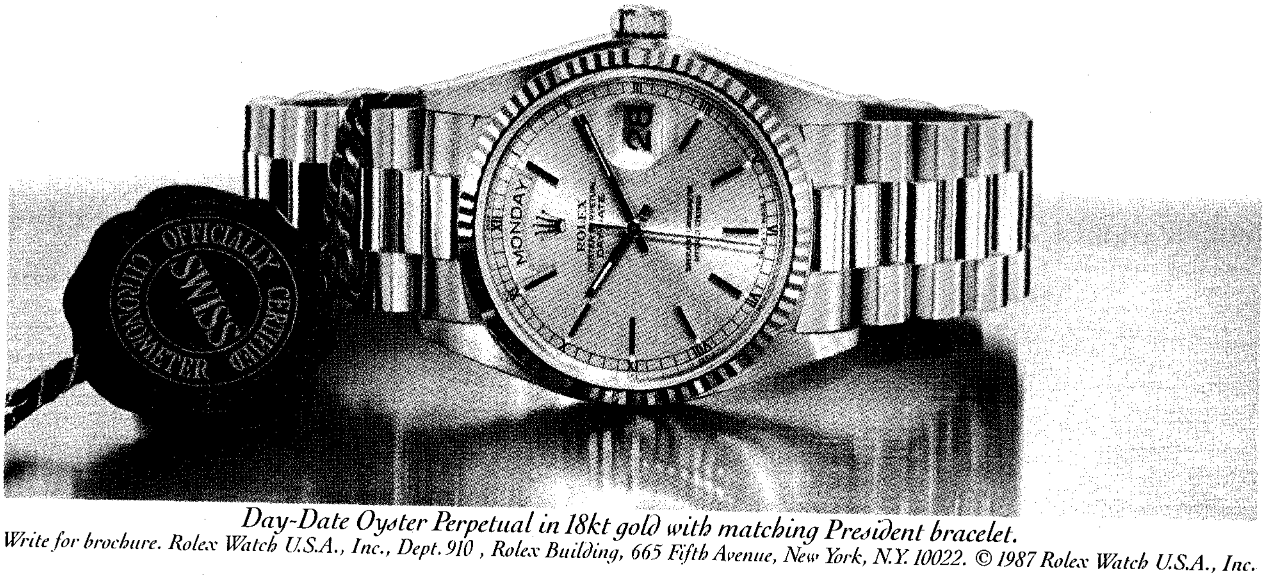

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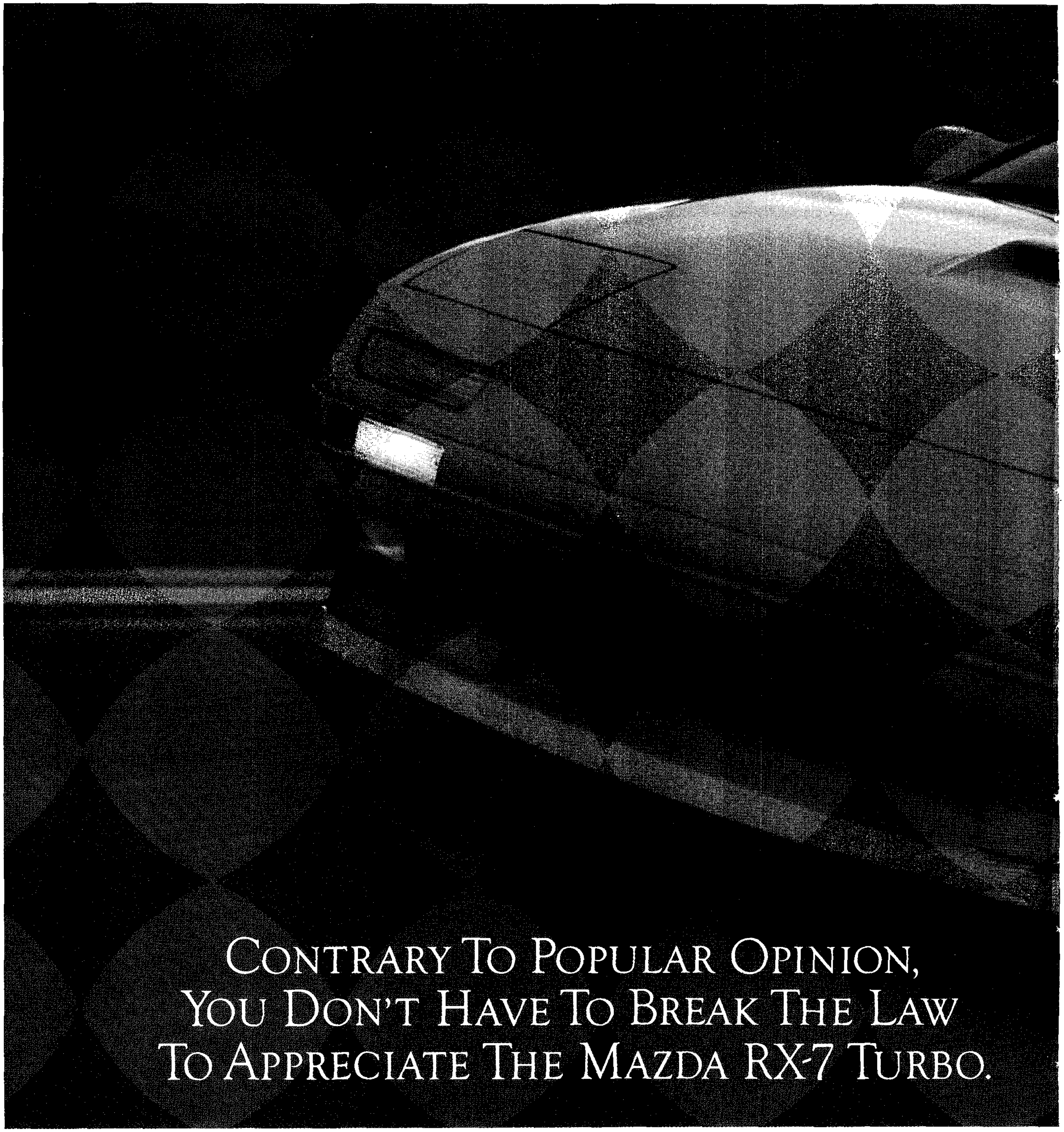
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 25.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Enemies, A Love Story" (†).
Theatre 2: "Black Rain" (†); and "New Year's Day" (directed by Henry Jaglom).
Theatre 3: "The Perfect Murder" (Zafir Hai).
Theatre 4: "The Handmaid's Tale" (Volker Schlöndorff), with Natasha Richardson, Faye Dunaway, Robert Duvall, and Aidan Quinn.
Theatre 5: "Mystery Train" (Jim Jarmusch).
Theatre 6: "Drugstore Cowboy" (†).

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
(Separate admissions) "Moving Pictures: Films by Photographers," a seven-program series about the impact of the photographer's eye on the art of cinema; and "Mr. Universe" (Gyorgy Szomjas; in Hungarian), with Laszlo Szabo, Geoffrey Pinter, and Mickey Hargitay.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Joe Versus the Volcano" (John Patrick Shanley), with Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan.
Theatre 2: Through March 15: "Men Don't Leave" (Paul Brickman), with Jessica Lange. From March 16: "Nuns on the Run" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eric Idle.
Theatre 3: "Mountains of the Moon" (†).

Bijou Cinema, 3rd Ave. between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)
"Born on the Fourth of July" (†).

Loews 19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "Joe Versus the Volcano" (John Patrick Shanley), with Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan.
Theatre 2: Through March 15: "Internal Affairs" (†). From March 16: "Blue Steel" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Jamie Lee Curtis and Ron Silver.
Theatre 3: "The Last of the Finest" (John MacKenzie), with Brian Dennehy.
Theatre 4: "Love at Large" (Alan Rudolph), with Tom Berenger, Elizabeth Perkins, and Anne Archer.
Theatre 5: "Glory" (†).
Theatre 6: "The Hunt for Red October" (John McTiernan), with Sean Connery, Alec Baldwin, Scott Glenn, Sam Neill, James Earl Jones, Joss Ackland, and Richard Jordan.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"My Left Foot" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Joe Versus the Volcano" (John Patrick Shanley), with Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "The Last of the Finest" (John MacKenzie), with Brian Dennehy.
Theatre 2: Through March 15: "Madhouse" (Tom Ropelewski), with John Larroquette and Kirstie Alley. From March 16: "Blue Steel" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Jamie Lee Curtis and Ron Silver.
Theatre 3: "The Hunt for Red October" (John McTiernan), with Sean Connery, Alec Baldwin, Scott Glenn, Sam Neill, James Earl Jones, Joss Ackland, and Richard Jordan.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
Through March 15: "Revenge" (Tony Scott), with Kevin Costner, Anthony Quinn, and Madeleine Stowe.
From March 16: "Nuns on the Run" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eric Idle.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"House Party" (Reginald Hudlin).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Enemies, A Love Story" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Rosalie Goes Shopping" (Percy Adlon), with Marianne Sägebrecht, Brad Davis, and Judge Reinhold.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through March 15: "Hard to Kill" (Bruce Malmuth), with Steven Seagal. From March 16: "Born on the Fourth of July" (†).
Theatre 2: "Bad Influence" (Curtis Hanson), with Rob Lowe, James Spader, and Lisa Zane.

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
Through March 15: "Revenge" (Tony Scott), with Kevin Costner, Anthony Quinn, and Madeleine Stowe.
From March 16: "Lord of the Flies" (Harry Hook).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: Through March 15: "Born on the Fourth of July" (†). From March 16: "Joe Versus the Volcano" (John Patrick Shanley), with Tom Hanks, Meg Ryan, and Lloyd Bridges.
Theatre 2: Through March 15: "Joe Versus the Volcano." From March 16: "Nuns on the Run" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eric Idle.

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "The Handmaid's Tale" (Volker Schlöndorff), with Natasha Richardson, Faye Dunaway, Robert Duvall, and Aidan Quinn.
Theatre 2: "Men Don't Leave" (Paul Brickman), with Jessica Lange.
Theatre 3: "Stella" (John Erman), with Bette Midler and John Goodman.

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Mountains of the Moon" (†).
Theatre 2: "Glory" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Coupe de Ville" (Joe Roth), with Daniel Stern, Arye Gross, Patrick Dempsey, and Alan Arkin.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "The Hunt for Red October" (John McTiernan), with Sean Connery, Alec Baldwin, Scott Glenn, Sam Neill, James Earl Jones, Joss Ackland, and Richard Jordan.
Theatre 2: Through March 15: "Internal Affairs" (†). From March 16: "Blue Steel" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Jamie Lee Curtis and Ron Silver.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Driving Miss Daisy" (†).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Love at Large" (Alan Rudolph), with Tom Berenger, Elizabeth Perkins, and Anne Archer.

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Joe Versus the Volcano" (John Patrick Shanley), with Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan.

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "The Hunt for Red October" (John McTiernan), with Sean Connery, Alec Baldwin, Scott Glenn, Sam Neill, James Earl Jones, Joss Ackland, and Richard Jordan.
Theatre 2: "The Hunt for Red October."

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Hard to Kill" (Bruce Malmuth), with Steven Seagal.
Theatre 2: "The Last of the Finest" (John MacKenzie), with Brian Dennehy.

WEST SIDE

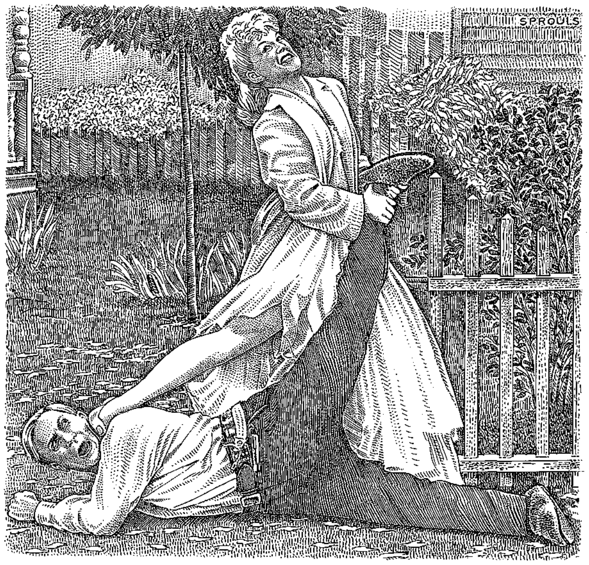
Bleecker Street Cinema 1 and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: Through March 15: "Labyrinth of Passion" (1982, directed by Pedro Almodóvar; in Spanish). From March 16: "Macho Dancer."
Theatre 2: Through March 15: "Driving Me Crazy" (Nick Broomfield). From March 16: "Labyrinth of Passion."

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Nightbreed" (Clive Barker), with David Cronenberg.
Theatre 2: "Bad Influence" (Curtis Hanson), with Rob Lowe, James Spader, and Lisa Zane.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
"Driving Miss Daisy" (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: Through March 15: "Born on the Fourth of July" (†). From March 16: "Lord of the Flies" (Harry Hook).
Theatre 2: "The Last of the Finest" (John MacKenzie), with Brian Dennehy.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Stella" (John Erman), with Bette Midler and John Goodman.
Theatre 2: "Roger & Me" (†).
Theatre 3: "Henry V" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Music Box" (†).



William Demarest and Betty Hutton in "The Miracle of Morgan's Creek"

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: Through March 15: "Men Don't Leave" (Paul Brickman), with Jessica Lange. From March 16: "Lord of the Flies" (Harry Hook).
Theatre 2: "Mountains of the Moon" (†).
Theatre 3: "Rosalie Goes Shopping" (Percy Adlon), with Marianne Sägebrecht, Brad Davis, and Judge Reinhold.
Theatre 4: "Bad Influence" (Curtis Hanson), with Rob Lowe, James Spader, and Lisa Zane.
Theatre 5: "Coupe de Ville" (Joe Roth), with Daniel Stern, Arye Gross, Patrick Dempsey, and Alan Arkin.
Theatre 6: "Hard to Kill" (Bruce Malmuth), with Steven Seagal.
Theatre 7: "Driving Miss Daisy" (†).
Theatre 8: "The Handmaid's Tale" (Volker Schlöndorff), with Natasha Richardson, Faye Dunaway, Robert Duvall, and Aidan Quinn.
Theatre 9: Through March 15: "Revenge" (Tony Scott), with Kevin Costner, Anthony Quinn, and Madeleine Stowe. From March 16: "Nuns on the Run" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eric Idle.

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Crimes and Misdemeanors" (†).
Theatre 2: "House Party" (Reginald Hudlin).
Theatre 3: "Born on the Fourth of July" (†).

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "Driving Miss Daisy" (†).
Theatre 2: "Born on the Fourth of July" (†).
Theatre 3: "Bad Influence" (Curtis Hanson), with Rob Lowe and James Spader.
Theatre 4: "The Handmaid's Tale" (Volker Schlöndorff), with Natasha Richardson, Faye Dunaway, Robert Duvall, and Aidan Quinn.

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

Theatre 5: Through March 15: "Field of Dreams" (†). From March 16: "Lord of the Flies" (Harry Hook).

Theatre 6: Through March 15: "The Fabulous Baker Boys" (†). From March 16: "Nuns on the Run" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eric Idle.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)

"The Last of the Finest" (John MacKenzie), with Brian Dennehy.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)

"Mountains of the Moon" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)

"Henry V" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)

Through March 15: "Roger & Me" (†).

From March 16: "For All Mankind" (Al Reinert), a documentary.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)

"Enemies, A Love Story" (†).

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)

"Crimes and Misdemeanors" (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)

"Camille Claudel" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)

"Driving Miss Daisy" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)

"Love at Large" (Alan Rudolph), with Tom Berenger, Elizabeth Perkins, and Anne Archer.

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)

"Joe Versus the Volcano" (John Patrick Shanley), with Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan.

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)

Theatre 1: "My Left Foot" (†).

Theatre 2: "Sweetie" (Jane Campion).

Theatre 3: "The Plot Against Harry" (Michael Roemer).

Cinema Studio 1 and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)

Theatre 1: "Too Beautiful for You" (Bertrand Blier; in French), with Gérard Depardieu, Josiane Balasko, and Carole Bouquet.

Theatre 2: "Cinema Paradiso" (Giuseppe Tornatore; in Italian), with Philippe Noiret and Salvatore Cascio.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

Through March 15: "Time of the Gypsies" (Emir Kusturica; in Romany).

From March 16: "Nuns on the Run" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eric Idle.

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)

Theatre 1: Through March 15: "Men Don't Leave" (Paul Brickman), with Jessica Lange. From March 16: "Blue Steel" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Jaime Lee Curtis and Ron Silver.

Theatre 2: "The Hunt for Red October" (John McTiernan), with Sean Connery and Alec Baldwin.

Theatre 3: "Driving Miss Daisy" (†).

Theatre 4: "The Handmaid's Tale" (Volker Schlöndorff), with Natasha Richardson, Faye Dunaway, Robert Duvall, and Aidan Quinn.

Theatre 5: "Mountains of the Moon" (†).

Theatre 6: "The Last of the Finest" (John MacKenzie), with Brian Dennehy.

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Theatre 1: Through March 15: "Born on the Fourth of July" (†). From March 16: "Lord of the Flies" (Harry Hook).

Theatre 2: "Bad Influence" (Curtis Hanson), with Rob Lowe and James Spader.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)

Theatre 1: "Hard to Kill" (Bruce Malmuth), with Steven Seagal.

Theatre 2: "House Party" (Reginald Hudlin).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: "House Party" (directed by Reginald Hudlin).

Theatre 2: "Streets."

Theatre 3: "Nightbreed" (Clive Barker), with David Cronenberg.

Theatre 4: "Joe Versus the Volcano" (John Patrick Shanley), with Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan.

Theatre 5: "House Party."

Theatre 6: "Basket Case 2" (Frank Henenlotter).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)

"The Last of the Finest" (John MacKenzie), with Brian Dennehy.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 2: Through March 15: "The Little Mermaid" (†). From March 16: "Blue Steel" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Jamie Lee Curtis and Ron Silver.

Theatre 3: Through March 15: "Madhouse" (Tom Ropelewski), with John Larroquette and Kirstie Alley. From March 16: "Blue Steel."

Theatre 4: "Internal Affairs" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)

"The Hunt for Red October" (John McTiernan), with Sean Connery and Alec Baldwin.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: "Revenge" (Tony Scott), with Kevin Costner.

Theatre 2: "Bad Influence" (Curtis Hanson), with Rob Lowe and James Spader.

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)

"The War of the Roses" (†).

West Side Cinema 1 and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)

Theatre 1: "Hard to Kill" (Bruce Malmuth), with Steven Seagal

Theatre 2: "Hard to Kill."

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)

March 12: "The Drunken Angel" (1948, directed by Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Takashi Shimura; and "I Live in Fear" (1955, Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune.

March 13-14: "No Regrets for Our Youth" (1946, Kurosawa; in Japanese); and "One Wonderful Sunday" (1947, Kurosawa; in Japanese).

March 15: "The Men Who Tread on the Tiger's Tail" (1945, Kurosawa; in Japanese); and "The Most Beautiful" (1944, Kurosawa; in Japanese).

March 16-17: "Kagemusha" ("The Shadow Warrior"; 1980, Kurosawa; in Japanese).

March 18-19: "The Hidden Fortress" (1958, Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Mifune; and "Horse" (1941, Kajiro Yamamoto; in Japanese).

March 20-21: "Sanshiro Sugata" (1943) and "Sanshiro Sugata, Part 2" (1945), both directed by Kurosawa, in Japanese, with Susumu Fujita.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through March 13: "Auntie Mame" (1958, Morton da Costa), with Rosalind Russell, Forrest Tucker, and Coral Browne; and "Gypsy" (1962, Mervyn LeRoy), with Russell, Natalie Wood, and Karl Malden.

March 14-15: "The Saragossa Manuscript" (1964, Wojciech Has); and "Knife in the Water" (1962, Roman Polanski; in Polish).

March 16-17: "Betty Blue" (1986, Jean-Jacques Beineix; in French); and "The Moon in the Gutter" (1983, Beineix; in French), with Gérard Depardieu and Nastassia Kinski.

March 18: "The Passion of Anna" (1970, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Liv Ullmann, Bibi Andersson, Max von Sydow, and Erland Josephson; and "Hour of the Wolf" (1968, Bergman; in Swedish), with von Sydow and Ullmann.

March 19-20: "Lost in America" (†); and "Modern Romance" (1981, Albert Brooks), with Brooks and Kathryn Harrold.

From March 21: "Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence" (1983, Nagisa Oshima), with David Bowie; and "In the Realm of the Senses" (1977, Oshima; in Japanese), with Eiko Matsuda and Tatsuya Fuji.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

Through March 13: "The 1000 Eyes of Dr. Mabuse" (1960, Fritz Lang), with Dawn Addams and Peter Van Eyck; and "The Big Heat" (1953, Lang), with Glenn Ford, Gloria Grahame, Alexander Scourby, and Lee Marvin.

March 14-15: "Imagine: John Lennon" (1988, Andrew Solt), a documentary; and "How I Won the War" (1967, Richard Lester), with Michael Crawford and John Lennon.

March 16-17: "Chinatown" (1974, Roman Polanski), with Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway, and John Huston; and "The Postman Always Rings Twice" (1981, Bob Rafelson), with Nicholson and Jessica Lange.

March 18: "Hamlet" (†).

March 19-20: "Unfaithfully Yours" (1948, Preston Sturges), with Rex Harrison, Linda Darnell, Edgar Kennedy, and Rudy Vallée; and "The Miracle of Morgan's Creek" (†).

From March 21: "The Road Warrior" (†); and "Mad Max" (1980, George Miller), with Mel Gibson.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

March 12: "October" ("Ten Days That Shook the World"; 1927, Sergei Eisenstein, silent); and "Potemkin" (1925, Eisenstein; silent).

March 13: "Man on the Flying Trapeze" (1935, Clyde Bruckman), with W. C. Fields; and "The Sin of Harold Diddlebock" (1947, Preston Sturges), with Harold Lloyd.

March 14: "Young and Innocent" ("The Girl Was Young"; 1937, Alfred Hitchcock), with Nova Pilbeam; and "Murder" (1930, Hitchcock), with Herbert Marshall and Norah Baring.

March 15: "Cabin in the Cotton" (†); and "Dangerous" (1936, Alfred E. Green), with Bette Davis and Franchot Tone.

March 16-17: "Butterfield 8" (1960, Daniel Mann), with Elizabeth Taylor, Laurence Harvey, and Dina Merrill; and "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" (1966, Mike Nichols), with Taylor, Richard Burton, George Segal, and Sandy Dennis.

March 18: "The Postman Always Rings Twice" (1946, Tay Garnett), with Lana Turner and John Garfield; and "The Bad and the Beautiful" (1953, Vincente Minnelli), with Turner, Kirk Douglas, Dick Powell, and Gloria Grahame.

March 19: "Umberto D." (1952, Vittorio De Sica; in Italian); and "Il Bidone" ("The Swindlers"; 1955, Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Broderick Crawford, Giulietta Masina, and Richard Basehart.

March 20: "Anna Christie" (1930, Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo, Charles Bickford, Marie Dressler, and George F. Marion; and "Anna Karenina" (1935, Brown), with Garbo, Fredric March, and Basil Rathbone.

March 21: "Red Desert" (1964, Michelangelo Antonioni; in Italian), with Monica Vitti and Richard Harris; and "Blow-Up" (1966, Antonioni), with Vanessa Redgrave and David Hemmings.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—March 12 at 2:30: "Peeping Tom" (1960, directed by Michael Powell), with Carl Boehm, Moira Shearer, and Anna Massey. . . . ¶ March 12 at 6: "Rear Window" (1954, Alfred Hitchcock), with James Stewart, Grace Kelly, and Wendell Corey. . . . ¶ March 13 at 2:30: "Pretty Baby" (1978, Louis Malle), with Keith Carradine, Susan Sarandon, and Brooke Shields. . . . ¶ March 13 at 6: "Letter to Jane" (1972, Jean-Luc Godard and Jean-Pierre Gorin). . . . ¶ March 15 at 2:30 and 6: 1989 award-winning British commercials. . . . ¶ March 15 at 6: "The Sky Pirate" (1969, Andrew Meyer).

Film Society of Lincoln Center (at MOMA)—The first programs in a seventeen-day international festival of new films by new directors. March 16 at 6: "Untamagiru" (Go Takemine, Japan). . . . ¶ March 16 at 9 and March 17 at 3:30: "Dancing in the Dust" (Henri Duparc, Ivory Coast). . . . ¶ March 17 at 6: "Water, Wind, Sand" (Amir Naderi, Iran). . . . ¶ March 17 at 8:30: "My 20th Century" (Ildikó Enyedi, Hungary). . . . ¶ March 18 at 3: "Untamagiru." . . . ¶ March 18 at 6: "My 20th Century." . . . ¶ March 18 at 8:30: "Water, Wind, Sand." . . . ¶ March 19 at 6: "Celia" (Ann Turner, Australia). . . . ¶ March 19 at 8:30 and March 20 at 6: "China, My Sorrow" (Dai Sijie, France and West Germany; in Cantonese and Mandarin). . . . ¶ March 20 at 8:30: "Celia." . . . ¶ March 21 at 6: "Palombella Rossa" (Nanni Moretti, Italy). . . . ¶ March 21 at 8:30: "Plainlands" (Pekka Parikka, Finland). (Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. For information, call 708-9501.)

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"MB Playhouse," a chance to see the television dramas you may have missed in the past thirty or so years. March 13-17: James Baldwin's "Go Tell It on the Mountain" (1985, Stan Lathan; PBS), with Paul Winfield, Olivia Cole, Rosalind Cash, Alfre Woodard, James Bond III, and Ruby Dee. . . . From March 20: Saul Bellow's "Seize the Day" (1987, Fiedler Cook; PBS), with Robin Williams, Jerry Stiller, and Joseph Wiseman. Showings Tuesdays at 3 and 6 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 3. . . . ¶ "Twenty

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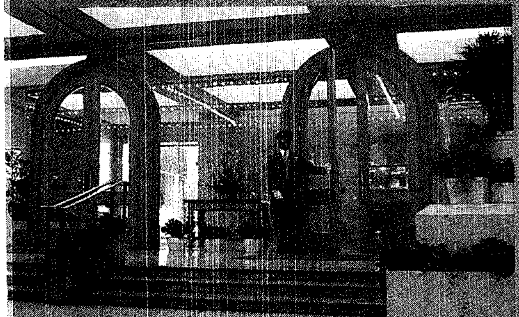

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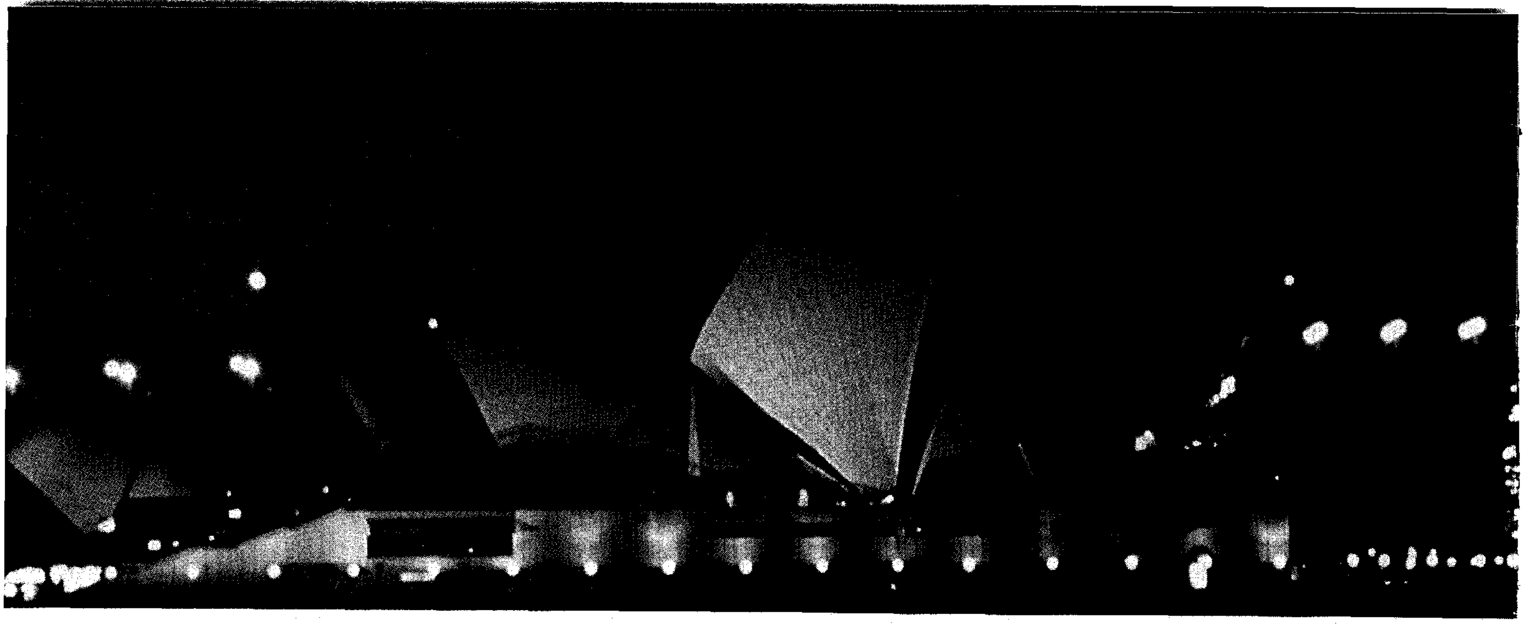

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MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

Years of Monty Python." From March 13: "The Pythons" (1979, BBC), interviews filmed on the set of "Life of Brian." Showings Tuesdays at 12:15 and 5:30 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 12:15. . . . ¶ "Laurence Olivier: The Television Legacy." March 13-17: "Uncle Vanya" (1967, Stuart Burge; NET), with Olivier, Michael Redgrave, Rosemary Harris, and Joan Plowright. Showings Tuesday at 3 and 6, Wednesday through Friday at 3, and Saturday at 1. . . . From March 20: "Long Day's Journey Into Night" (1973, Peter Wood; ABC), with Olivier, Constance Cummings, Denis Quilley, and Ronald Pickup. Showings Tuesday at 2:30 and 5:30, Wednesday through Friday at 2:30, and Saturday at 1. . . . ¶ "The Reiner Moritz Collection." March 13-17: "Bruce Chatwin" (1982, Nigel Wattis), a documentary about Chatwin's visit to the South Wales border country. Showings Tuesday at 2 and 6:30 and Wednesday through Saturday at 2. . . . March 13-17: "The Spirit of Music" (1988, Jeremy Marre), a documentary. Showings Tuesday through Saturday at 3:15. . . . From March 20: "Making 'The Mahabharata' " (1989), a documentary. Showings Tuesday at 2 and 6:30 and Wednesday through Saturday at 2. . . . From March 20: "The Origins of Music" (1988, Jeremy Marre), a documentary. Showings Tuesday through Saturday at 3:15.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—In the Riklis Theatre. Films directed by Mike Nichols. March 14-16 at 1: "Television Appearances: Mike Nichols and Elaine May," a fifty-five-minute compilation, all from 1959-60. . . . March 14 at 2: "Silkwood" (1983), with Meryl Streep, Kurt Russell, and Cher. . . . March 15 at 2:30: "Heartburn" (1986), with Streep, Jack Nicholson, Jeff Daniels, and Maureen Stapleton. . . . March 16 at 2:30: "Working Girl" (1989), with Melanie Griffith, Harrison Ford, and Sigourney Weaver. . . . ¶ Films released in 1989. March 17 at 2: "Great Balls of Fire" (Jim McBride), with Dennis Quaid and Winona Ryder. . . . March 17 at 5: "Parents" (Bob Balaban), with Randy Quaid and Mary Beth Hurt. Mr. Balaban will be present. . . . March 18 at 2: "Powwow Highway" (Jonathan Wacks), with A Martinez and Gary Farmer. . . . March 18 at 5: "84 Charlie Mopic" (Patrick Duncan), with Jonathan Emerson and Nicholas Cascone. . . . March 21 at 2:30: "Great Balls of Fire."

Anthology Film Archives, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—Films showing in either the Jonas Mekas Theatre or the Maya Deren Theatre. March 14 at 7: "Arsenal" (1929, Alexander Dovzhenko). . . . ¶ March 14 at 9: "La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc" (1928, Carl Theodor Dreyer). . . . ¶ March 15-16 at 7: "The Kreutzer Sonata" (1926, Gustav Machatý; silent). . . . ¶ March 15-17 at 9 and March 18 at 7: "From Saturday to Sunday" (1931, Machatý; in Czech). . . . ¶ March 16 at 7: "Diary Series I," five short films by Howard Guttenplan. . . . ¶ March 17 at 5:30 and March 18 at 9: "Such Is Life" (1929, Karl Junghans; silent). . . . ¶ March 17 at 7: "Diary Series II," four short films by Guttenplan. . . . ¶ March 17 at 7: "Battalion" (1927, Premysl Prazsky; silent). . . . ¶ March 18 at 5:30: Nine short Czech films, 1898-1934, made on location in Prague. . . . ¶ March 18 at 7: "Diary Series III," four short films by Guttenplan; and "Eye-Con," a work in progress by Guttenplan. . . . ¶ March 21 at 7: "Earth" (1930, Dovzhenko). . . . ¶ March 21 at 9: "Vampyr" (1932, Dreyer).

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—March 14 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Carnival in Flanders" (1935, Jacques Feyder; in French), with Françoise Rosay, Jean Murat, André Alerme, and Louis Jouvet. . . . ¶ March 21 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Lola Montès" (1955, Max Ophuls; in French and English), with Martine Carol, Peter Ustinov, Anton Walbrook, and Oskar Werner.

Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., State Office Building, 163 W. 125th St. (873-5040)—March 19 at 6: "The Learning Tree" (1969, Gordon Parks), with Kyle Johnson, Estelle Evans, and Dick Ward; and "Sounder" (1972, Martin Ritt), with Cicely Tyson, Paul Winfield, Kevin Hooks, and Janet MacLachlan. . . . ¶ March 20 at 6: "Hollywood Shuffle" (1987, Robert Townsend); and "I'm Gonna Git You Sucka" (1988, Keenen Ivory Wayans), with Jim Brown, Isaac Hayes, Antonio Fargas, Bernie Carey, and Wayans.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Terrence Rafferty.)

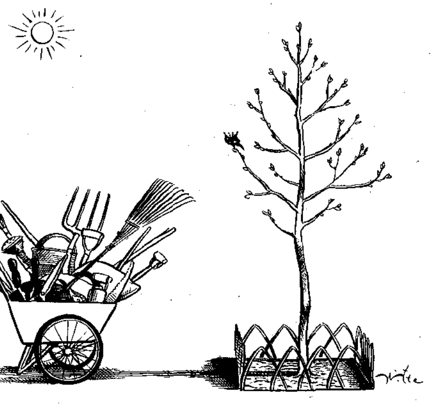
Black Rain—The most surprising thing about this film, which tells the story of a family of survivors of the atomic-bomb attack on Hiroshima, is that it isn't depressing. It's too intelligent; every scene is drenched in irony. The director, Shohei Imamura, treats the bombing itself with telling poetic concision, as a series of awful tableaux flashing before us with the speed of memory. Then, abruptly, he cuts to a tranquil-looking country scene and a very different kind of story. It's five years later, and the Shizuma family, last seen making their way through the wreckage of the city, now live in a remote village and are preoccupied with a traditional problem of Japanese movie families: arranging a marriage. This leisurely rural existence is restful in only the most superficial ways: two members of the family suffer from radiation sickness and have been ordered not to work hard. The Shizumas live in a perpetual state of suspension, a constant twilight; their survival is more like a wary, static persistence. We're unsure how to respond; we've never seen a family drama quite like this. Imamura's film looks at times like one of Yasujiro Ozu's dignified, formal movies about middle-class problems, but the life of the Shizumas is Ozu's world seen in a very dark looking glass. The film's tone is analytical and distanced. Imamura has transformed this Hiroshima story into a Sartrean soap opera. With Yoshiko Tanaka, Kazuo Kitamura, and Etsuko Ichihara. The screenplay, by Imamura and Toshiro Ishido, is based on a novel by Masuji Ibuse. Superb black-and-white cinematography by Takashi Kawamata; a harrowingly beautiful score by Toru Takemitsu. In Japanese.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/26/90.) (Angelika Film Center.)

Born on the Fourth of July—An antiwar epic, it's like one of those commemorative issues of *Life*. This one covers 1956 to 1976, and the counterculture is presented in a nostalgic, aesthetically reactionary way: it's made part of our certified public memories. The director, Oliver Stone, plays bumper cars with the camera and uses cutting to jam you into the action, and you can't even enjoy his uncouthness, because it's put at the service of sanctimony. The pure of heart, Catholic and patriotic hero Ron Kovic (Tom Cruise) thinks war is how he'll prove himself a man. He joins the Marine Corps and is sent to Vietnam; in 1968, his spine is severed, and he's left in a wheelchair, impotent, paralyzed from the chest down. The movie is a scream of rage at how he was betrayed, mutilated, neglected; it's also an uplifting account of how he boozed, quarrelled with everyone, and despaired until he stopped being contemptuous of the war protesters and became active in Vietnam Veterans Against the War. Overblown right from the start, this story is constructed as a series of blackout episodes that suggest the Stations of the Cross; rising strings alert you to the heavy stuff. Then the finale—Resurrection—takes Ron into white light, and John Williams lays on the trumpets. The script, by Stone and Kovic, is based on Kovic's autobiography. With Willem Dafoe, Tom Berenger, Raymond J. Barry as the gentle father, Caroline Kava as the castrating Mom, Kyra Sedgwick as Donna, and Abbie Hoffman.—P.K. (1/22/90) (Bijou Cinema, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Worldwide Cinemas. . . . ¶ Baronet, Art Greenwich Twin, and Metro Cinema; through March 15. . . . ¶ Manhattan Twin; starting March 16.)

Cabin in the Cotton (1932)—Bette Davis in her first wickedly sexy role, trying to tempt Richard Barthelmess away from virtue (Dorothy Jordan). The melodrama about the cheating Southern planters is naïvely socially conscious, but Davis has a lot of fresh impact. Michael Curtiz directed; with Henry B. Walthall, Clarence Muse, Hardie Albright, David Landau, Tully Marshall, and oily, villainous Berton Churchill. The script, by Paul Green, was adapted from H. H. Knoll's novel.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 15.)

Camille Claudel—She lived, she loved, she sculpted, she went nuts. Bruno Nuytten's first film is a de-luxe biography of a nearly forgotten (but attractive!) artist who studied with the great Rodin, became his assistant and lover, and then struggled to break free of his influence and discover her own identity as a sculptor. Willful (and comely) as she is, Camille never manages to shake her obsession with Rodin, and she makes a mess of her life and her career. This is rich material, but the movie is a real chore to sit through: it's two and a half hours long, and the pace is sluggish. Nuytten, a superb cinematographer ("French Provincial," "Barocco"), doesn't seem to know how to tell a story—not one as complex as this, anyway. Isabelle Adjani plays Camille (there are obvious similarities to her role in "The Story of Adèle H.") with terrific abandon and intensity, yet the performance isn't satisfying; the film is so poorly shaped as drama that even her most striking moments seem to come out of nowhere. Also with Gérard Depardieu as Rodin, Laurent Grevill as Paul Claudel (Camille's younger brother, who became a well-known writer), and Alain Cuny. The script, by Nuytten and Marilyn Goldin, is based on a biography by Reine-Marie Paris. In French.—T.R. (Paris.)

Crimes and Misdemeanors—Written and directed by Woody Allen, it's a sad, censuring look at an eminent ophthalmologist (Martin Landau) and other crooks in high places who (in Allen's view) have convinced themselves that they can do anything, because they don't think God is watching. Allen is making the film equivalent of a play of ideas, and the ideas have no excitement. He's telling us not just what we already know but what we've already rejected. Woody Allen himself plays a little, grubbing-for-a-living documentary filmmaker who falls in love but can't compete for the woman (Mia Farrow) against a darling of the media, a tall, egomaniacal TV producer played with a wonderfully smug, screwy abandon by Alan Alda. Except for Alda, and Landau (when he's showing nervous impatience), and Jerry Orbach, who plays the ophthalmologist's shady brother, most of the large cast is proficient yet brittle and dull. With Sam Waterston (as a rabbi who's going blind), Anjelica Huston, Claire Bloom, Joanna Gleason, Caroline Aaron, Nora Ephron in a bit, and Daryl Hannah—uncredited, but looking so luscious she almost stops the show. The bland cinematography is by Sven Nykvist.—P.K. (10/30/89) (23rd



St. West Triplex, and Carnegie Screening Room.)

Driving Miss Daisy—Alfred Uhry's adaptation of his much honored play is still full of manipulative bits—it's virtually all manipulative bits—but the director, Bruce Beresford, understands how to work them while cutting down on their obviousness. Set in Atlanta, starting in 1948, the movie is the story of the companionship that develops between stubborn, suspicious Miss Daisy (Jessica Tandy), a wealthy Jewish widow of seventy-two, and her resilient chauffeur, Hoke (Morgan Freeman), a widower about a decade younger than she is. Essentially, it's about how he changes her. He's made upright, considerate, humane—he's made perfect—so that nothing will disturb our appreciation of the gentle, bittersweet reverie we're watching. But it's acted (and directed) eloquently. Tandy and Freeman achieve a beautiful equilibrium. And Dan Aykroyd comes through with a fine performance as Miss Daisy's good-old-boy son.—P.K. (12/25/89) (68th St. Playhouse, 8th St. Playhouse, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, Cinema 3, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

Drugstore Cowboy—Nihilistic humor rarely bubbles up in a movie as freely as it does here. Set in Portland, Oregon, in 1971, the story is about two couples who live together and travel around the Pacific Northwest robbing hospitals and pharmacies, grabbing fistfuls of pills and capsules. They're like a junkie version of Clyde Barrow's gang. The director, Gus Van Sant, takes us inside a lot of underground attitudes: the druggies are monomaniacal about leading an aimless existence—they see themselves as romantic figures. They're comic, but they're not put down for being comic. The picture keeps you laughing because it's so nonjudgmental. Van Sant is half in and half out of the desire of adolescents to remain kids forever. As the gang's twenty-six-year-old leader, Matt Dillon brings the role a light self-mockery that helps set the tone of the film, and Kelly Lynch is strikingly effective as the leader's wife. Also with James Le Gros, Heather Graham, James Remar, Max Perlich, Beah Richards, Grace Zabriskie, and William Burroughs. The script, by the director and Daniel Yost, was based on an unpublished novel by James Fogle, who's in prison for drug-related robberies.—P.K. (10/30/89) (Angelika Film Center.)

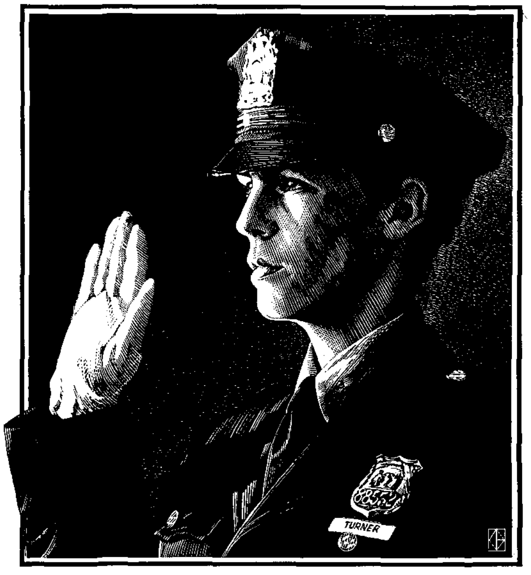
Fiona Shaw in "Mountains of the Moon"

Enemies, A Love Story—Emotionally overwhelming. Adapted from Isaac Bashevis Singer's New York City novel, set in 1949—a post-Holocaust sex farce in which three passionately jealous women are in love with a guilt-ridden, self-effacing man. The director, Paul Mazursky, has gathered a superbly balanced cast and kept the action so smooth that the viewer is carried along on a tide of mystical slyness. Ron Silver is the Polish-Jewish intellectual who survived the Final Solution by hiding in a hayloft. Margaret Sophie Stein is the Gentile peasant (now his wife) who risked her life to take care of him. Lena Olin is his diabolically willful mistress, a survivor of the camps. Anjelica Huston is the wife (with an erotic aura) he thought was killed by the Nazis. This richly satisfying movie is restrained, yet it has its own deeply crazy turmoil. Mazursky pulls the rug out from under us, and we drop through the farce. With Alan King, Judith Malina, Phil Leeds, and Mazursky. The script is by Roger L. Simon and the director.—P.K. (12/25/89) (Angelika Film Center, Gotham Cinema, and Carnegie Hall Cinema.)

The Fabulous Baker Boys—Two lounge pianists (brothers, played by Beau and Jeff Bridges) add a vocalist (Michelle Pfeiffer) to their act, and she changes their lives. This romantic fantasy has a forties-movie sultriness and an eighties movie-struck melancholy. Put them together and you have a movie in which eighties glamour is being defined. The young writer-director Steve Kloves trips off your bluesy, narcissistic feelings about popular music and commercial-movie emotions; he invites you to laugh if you want to. (You feel the heat even if you're laughing.) The three stars seem perfect at what they're doing—newly minted icons. When Pfeiffer (who does her own singing) delivers "Makin' Whoopee," while crawling over a grand piano like a long-legged kitty-cat, she rivals Rita Hayworth in "Gilda."—P.K. (10/16/89) (Worldwide Cinemas; through March 15.)

Field of Dreams—Doggerel emotion. Kevin Costner, a New Age farmer in Iowa, longs to be reconciled with his dead father, a minor-league baseball player whose outlook he had rejected in the sixties. He hears a whispered command to build a baseball field, and when he does the spirits of Shoeless Joe Jackson (Ray Liotta) and the other White Sox who were barred from baseball for life after the 1919 World Series scandal arrive and play regularly. This is only the beginning of the hero's mystical encounters. That the film is sincere doesn't mean it's not manipulative; when the weepers in the audience start up, you may feel like a pariah if you're not moved. Adapted by the writer-director Phil Alden Robinson from W. P. Kinsella's 1982 novel, "Shoeless Joe." With Amy Madigan, James Earl Jones, Burt Lancaster, Dwier Brown as the father, Tim Busfield, and Gaby Hoffman.—P.K. (5/1/89) (Worldwide Cinemas; through March 15.)

Glory—This Civil War epic, based on fiery, spirit-stirring material that has never before been tapped for the movies, is emotionally moving even when the scenes falter. The 54th Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry was the first black fighting unit to be formed in the North, and the white colonel in command of the effort to prove that black men had the discipline and valor to stand up against the enemy was Robert Gould Shaw, the twenty-five-year-old son of abolitionists. As the small, sad-faced Shaw, Matthew Broderick shows us the misery of a softhearted commanding officer who is determined to prepare his men for what's ahead. Denzel Washington, Morgan Freeman, and Andre Braugher are the usual representative group of enlistees who bicker and quarrel before they shape up and become fine soldiers, but the actors perform the roles as if they've never been played before. Although the script is a conventional melodrama, the director, Edward Zwick, has made something more thoughtful than that. He doesn't have the instinct for images that would burst the written framework, but he's made a good film on a great subject. The screenplay, based partly on Shaw's letters, is by Kevin Jarre. With Jihmi Kennedy.—P.K. (2/5/90) (Loews 19th Street East 6, and Gemini.)

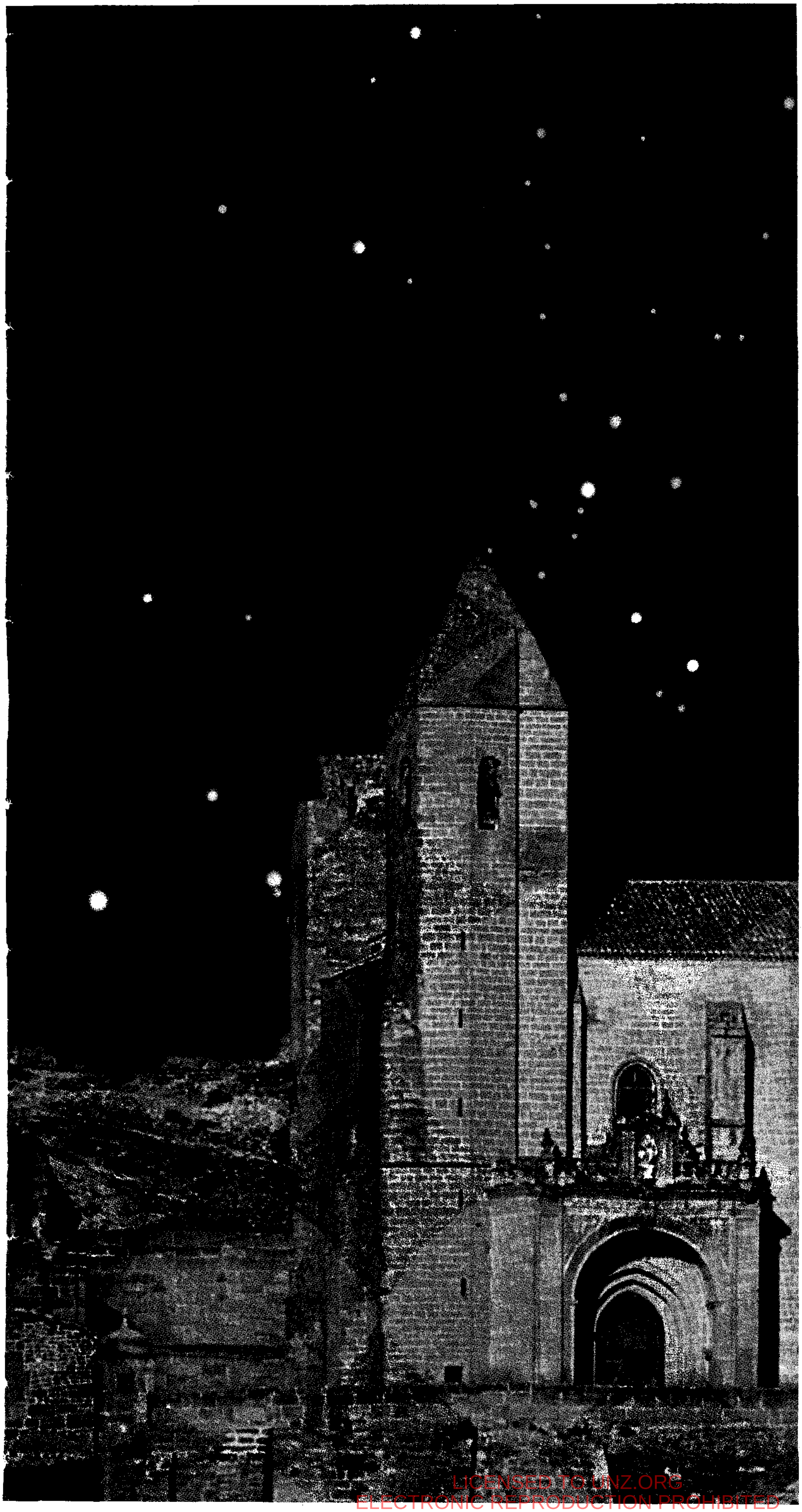


Jamie Lee Curtis in "Blue Steel"

Hamlet (1948)—Laurence Olivier produced and directed this fluid, handsome, satisfyingly paced version, and he himself is a witty and active platinum-blond Hamlet. It's a tribute to Shakespeare's passionate immediacy that everyone has his own idea of the play, and many will find much to quarrel with in this film. (For example, the soliloquies have been turned into interior monologues, which diminishes them.) But even if you feel that certain scenes should be done differently, when has the rest of the play been done so well? Whatever the omissions, the mutilations, the mistakes, this is very likely the most exciting and most alive production of "Hamlet" you will ever see on the screen. It's never dull, and if characters such as Fortinbras and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have been sacrificed, it's remarkable how little they are missed. With Jean Simmons as Ophelia, Basil Sydney as the King, Eileen Herlie as the Queen, Stanley Holloway as the Grave Digger, and Felix Aylmer as Polonius. The adaptation is by Alan Dent, and the music is by William Walton.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; March 18.)

Henry V—Adapted and directed by its young star, Kenneth Branagh, this fast-paced version isn't exultant, like the one made forty-five years earlier by Laurence Olivier. Branagh emphasizes the price paid for war: the bloodshed. And, in keeping with his generation's supposed disillusion with war, he minimizes the play's glorification of the English fighting man. His conception of how to film the play is to look closely at the conniving, the misgivings, the ego wars. (This epic noir doesn't indicate why the French lost at Agincourt.) Branagh is not an overnight great moviemaker; his attempts at spectacular effects strain his inventiveness. But as an actor he has something of James Cagney's confident Irishness; he's intensely likable, with a beautiful, expressive voice and a straightforwardness that drives the whole film ahead. He and the other performers are so up that you feel their pride in working on true dramatic poetry. It's a company of stars: Paul Scofield as the melancholy French king whose face foretells the doom of his army, Christopher Ravenscroft as the herald Mountjoy, Derek Jacobi as the Chorus, Judi Dench as Mistress Quickly, Robbie Coltrane as Falstaff, Brian Blessed as Exeter, Richard Briers as Bardolph, Richard Easton as the Constable of France, Alec McCowen as Ely, Robert Stephens as Pistol, Emma Thompson as Katherine, Geraldine McEwan as Alice, Christian Bale as Falstaff's boy, and, best of all, perhaps, Ian Holm as the chattering Welshman Fluellen.—P.K. (11/27/89) (Quad Cinema, and Festival.)

Internal Affairs—Bad fun. This sophisticated variant of other L.A. cops-and-coke-and-art-world thrillers has a creepy, rhythmic quality that sucks you in and keeps you amused. The subtext is ingeniously nasty: it's a dirty, sexy twist on the Iago-Othello relationship. This Iago is a prosperous veteran cop, played by Richard Gere, who's being investigated by two officers from the Police Department's internal-affairs division: a righteous, ramrod-straight Latino (Andy Garcia) with a beautiful blond wife, and his sane, honest partner (Laurie



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Everything Under the Sun

Metcalf). Gere torments the stiff-backed Othello (Garcia), boasting of his adulterous conquest of the blond wife, and manipulates him into a jealous rage. Gere slithers through the picture very dexterously, but Garcia gives a one-note, glaring-eyed performance: except for his key, violent explosions (which are terrific), he's so rigid he's barely human. As Garcia's partner, a lesbian who doesn't try to ingratiate herself with anybody, Metcalf gives a strong, contained performance. Directed by Mike Figgis, whose previous feature was the 1988 "Stormy Monday." The smart script is by Henry Bean.—P.K. (2/5/90) (Embassy. . . . ¶ Loews 19th Street East 6, and Loews New York Twin; through March 15.)

The Little Mermaid—Disney-style kitsch. It's technologically sophisticated, but with just about all the simpering old Disney values in place. They're just slightly updated: the Little Mermaid—a teen-age tootsie in a flirty seashell bra—is like Sleeping Beauty plus tomboy spunk. The film does have a cheerful calypso number ("Under the Sea," by Howard Ashman and Alan Menken), and the color is bright—at least, until the mermaid goes on land, when everything seems to dull out. Pat Carroll provides the voice of Ursula, the Sea Witch; Samuel E. Wright provides the voice of Sebastian.—P.K. (12/11/89) (Embassy; through March 15.)

Lost in America (1985)—Original and pleasantly snappy. It lacks the fullness of a major comedy, but Albert Brooks, who stars in it and directed, is onto something; satirizing the upper middle class from within, he shows the nagging terror along with the complacency. And he keeps you laughing fairly steadily. As David, an L.A. advertising whiz, he's an only slightly exaggerated specimen of a large number of rising young businessmen and professional men—the insecure successes, the swollen-headed worriers. He's an anxious wreck who tortures himself and his wife over every detail of his existence. With her little-girl breathiness and her look of panic, Julie Hagerty is an ideal choice for the timid, depressed woman who puts up with him. The picture is about what happens when these two buy a luxury motor home and, with the security of a nest egg of roughly a hundred and forty-five thousand dollars, set out to find themselves and get in touch with the real America. With Gary Marshall as the pit boss of the Desert Inn Casino, and Art Frankel and Michael Greene. The script is by Brooks and Monica Johnson.—P.K. (Cinema Village; March 19-20.)

The Miracle of Morgan's Creek (1944)—It's wartime, and Betty Hutton is the over-enthusiastic girl who dates a soldier and produces sextuplets. This is one of Preston Sturges's surreal-slapstick-satire-conniption-fit comedies, and part of our great crude heritage. The picture was held up a year because of censorship problems, and you'll know why. With Eddie Bracken, Diana Lynn, William Demarest, Porter Hall, Esther Howard, J. Farrell MacDonald as the Sheriff, Jimmy Conlin as the Mayor, and, carried over from "The Great McGinty," Brian Donlevy as the Governor and Akim Tamiroff as the Boss.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; March 19-20.)

Mountains of the Moon—An awfully strange movie about an 1857 expedition to discover the source of the Nile and the subsequent feud between the explorers, Richard Burton (Patrick Bergin) and John Hanning Speke (Iain Glen). The director, Bob Rafelson, seems to be trying for a mixture of irony and spectacle, but he doesn't carry it off. Although he deliberately underplays the romance of nineteenth-century exploration, his historical irony isn't rigorous enough: it doesn't extend to Burton. Burton, a dashing intellectual adventurer, was in some ways ahead of his time; Rafelson distorts history to make Burton seem entirely a man of *our* time—the enlightened opposite of all the Victorian values and mores we now reject. Rafelson fails to make his hero human; he loves Burton but, by turning him into a prophet of twentieth-century values, betrays him. The director and his cinematographer, Roger Deakins, give the film a wonderful look in the African scenes; during the explorers' arduous trek we often feel, despite everything that's going wrong, that we're on the verge of seeing something amazing. But, whatever it might be, it remains just over the horizon. The film runs two hours and fifteen minutes, and seems longer. Also with Richard E. Grant, Bernard Hill, Fiona Shaw, and Paul Onsongo. The screenplay is by Rafelson and William Harrison (the author of a 1982 novel called "Burton and Speke").—T.R. (3/12/90) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Gemini, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

Music Box—When the cast and the script are right for Costa-Gavras—as they are here—he can give a courtroom melodrama the pull and excitement of a thriller. Jessica Lange is the Chicago lawyer defending her retired steelworker father (Armin Mueller-Stahl) against deportation to Hungary, where the Communist government is waiting to try him for war crimes. The emotional core of the movie is that during the trial, as the Second World War victims give their accounts, the daughter begins to lose faith in her father's innocence. There are no flashbacks; there's no shock apparatus. We simply take in what they're saying, and we watch her take it in. Lange verges on the astounding. Costa-Gavras provides a low-key, controlled atmosphere, and she fills it with passion. The final plot developments feel fake, but this is a remarkably lucid piece of storytelling. The script is by Joe Eszterhas.—P.K. (1/8/90) (Quad Cinema.)

My Left Foot—The greatness of Daniel Day-Lewis's performance as the Dubliner Christy Brown, a victim of cerebral palsy who became a painter and a writer, is that he pulls you inside Christy's frustration and rage (and his bottomless thirst). There's nothing soft or maudlin about this movie's view of Christy: he's anguished and locked in, yet excitingly insolent. The movie may tear you apart, but it's the story of a triumphantly tough guy who lived it up, and Day-Lewis's interpretation has some of the sexual seductiveness that was so startling in Olivier's Richard III. This is the first film of the Irish playwright-director Jim Sheridan, who wrote the superb screenplay with another Irish playwright, Shane Connaughton. With Brenda Fricker, Fiona Shaw, and Hugh O'Conor playing Christy as a child.—P.K. (10/2/89) (Gramercy, and Lincoln Plaza.)

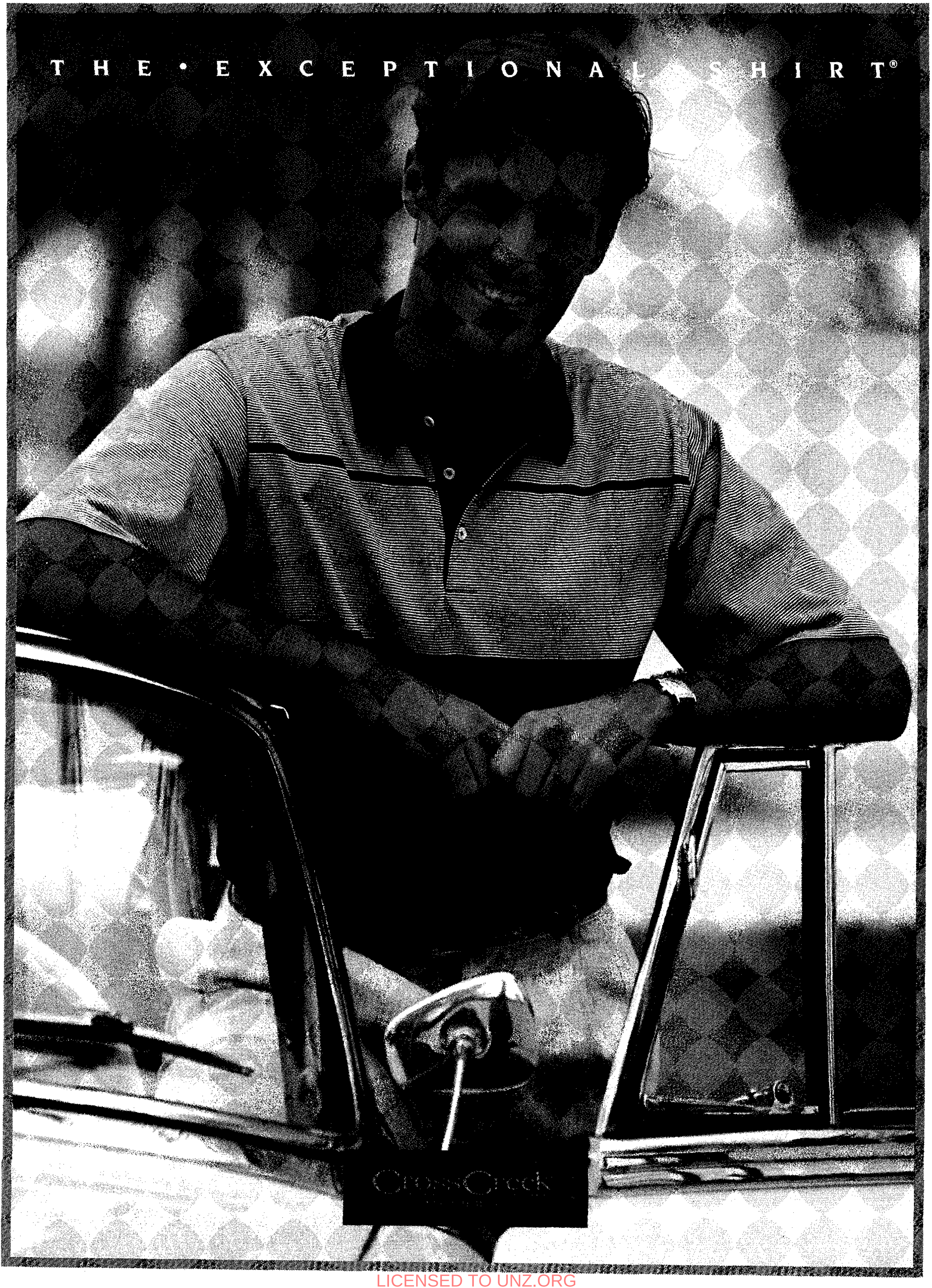
The Road Warrior (1982)—Set in a post-apocalyptic Wasteland, this Australian film, a sequel to the 1979 "Mad Max" and known as "Mad Max 2" in other countries, is a mutant, sprung from virtually all action genres. George Miller, who directed, may have been content to make an openly sophomoric bash in "Mad Max," but this time he's in the mythmaking business. The film is one continuous spurt of energy, and the jangly, fast editing suggests wit; so does the broad blacktop highway that cuts across the desert nothingness. And the rampaging vandals are S & M comic-strip terrors; they menace the decent folk, in more barbarous and gaudier versions of the way the wild motorcyclists in Roger Corman pictures did. But the film is abstract in an adolescent way. Miller's attempt to tap into the universal concept of the hero (as enunciated by Jung and explicated by Joseph Campbell in "The Hero with a Thousand Faces") makes the film joyless. He consciously uses his hero, Max (Mel Gibson), as an icon; that's enough to squeeze the juice out of any actor, and Max seems bland and apathetic. There are perhaps ten minutes of spectacular imagery, and if you think of George Miller as one of the kinetic moviemakers, such as John Carpenter and George A. Romero, he's a giant, but he's pushing for more and he apparently doesn't see the limitations of the kind of material he's working with. For all its huffing and puffing, this is a sappy, sentimental movie. The script is by Terry Hayes and Miller, with Brian Hannant.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; starting March 21.)

Roger & Me—Michael Moore's widely praised muckraking documentary is about his two-and-a-half-year pursuit of Roger Smith, the chairman of General Motors, who, according to the film, is directly responsible for closing eleven plants and bringing about the destruction of Flint, Michigan—GM's birthplace and Moore's home town. The film purports to show what was happening in Flint from February, 1987, to August, 1989, but what happens is that Moore, a big shambling joker who's the director, producer, writer, and star, deadpans his way through interviews with an assortment of unlikely people, who are used as stooges. He chases gags and improvises his own version of history: in his account of the plant closings, the worker layoffs, and the construction of tourist attractions, he compresses the events of many years and fiddles with the time sequence. He comes on in a give-'em-hell style, but he breaks faith with the audience. And he does something that is humanly very offensive: "Roger & Me" uses its leftism as a superior attitude. Members of the audience can laugh at ordinary working people and still feel that they're taking a politically correct position.—P.K. (1/8/90) (Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ 57th St. Playhouse; through March 15.)

The War of the Roses—Michael Douglas and Kathleen Turner play Oliver and Barbara Rose, a yuppie couple whose banally "perfect" marriage isn't strong enough to survive their individual mid-life crises. When they decide to divorce, things get real ugly: the Roses' hatred and pettiness keep escalating, to the point of absurdity and far beyond. These successful, eighties-style people are revealed as greedy, self-centered, infantile: they'd rather die than have to sacrifice either their egos or their possessions. (This social observation may not come as a surprise to everybody.) "The War of the Roses," written by Michael Leeson (from a novel by Warren Adler), is one of Hollywood's periodic attempts at black comedy, and, like most of its predecessors, it's not quite black enough and not quite funny enough. The director, Danny DeVito, who also acts in the film, seems a bit too pleased with his own outrageousness. The picture has a peculiar, not very satisfying tone: smugly savage.—T.R. (Warner.)

Akira Kurosawa's rarely shown 1943 début movie, "Sanshiro Sugata," is like "The Karate Kid" made by an artist. Midway through, a judo guru named Yano, the mentor of the title hero, admires the beauty of a woman praying at a Shinto shrine: "I saw something good. . . . Makes me feel good." That reaction should be shared by any who go to the Biograph Cinema on March 20 and 21 to see this affecting and exciting film. "Sanshiro Sugata" shows off the talents of a vivid, audacious, mystical—but also down-to-earth and humorous—director, in first bloom. It pivots on the blossoming of a lotus that brings the hero a restorative vision of truth and beauty. Sanshiro is a quester with an inchoate conscience; Yano helps him perfect his heart and soul as well as his reflexes and muscles.

The movie centers on the two men's struggle to establish judo, rather than jujitsu, as the Japanese martial art of choice. The action builds to Sanshiro's bout with a jujitsu master at a police tournament; along the way, the hero falls in love with his opponent's daughter. Battles between warring martial-arts sects, a coming of age achieved through the discipline of self-defense, a Romeo and Juliet subplot—these have also been the elements of hot-weather exploitation movies. But Kurosawa's simultaneously mythic and humane vision transforms them. The flower scene recalls Edmund's vision of beatitude in "Long Day's Journey Into Night": "For a second you see the secret—and, seeing the secret, are the secret. For a second there is meaning!" And the movie boasts Kurosawa's distinctive signatures: the "wipes" that hurtle images on and off the screen, the surgical staging of action sequences, the surging rhythm of the editing. "Sanshiro Sugata" is in the top rank of directorial débuts.



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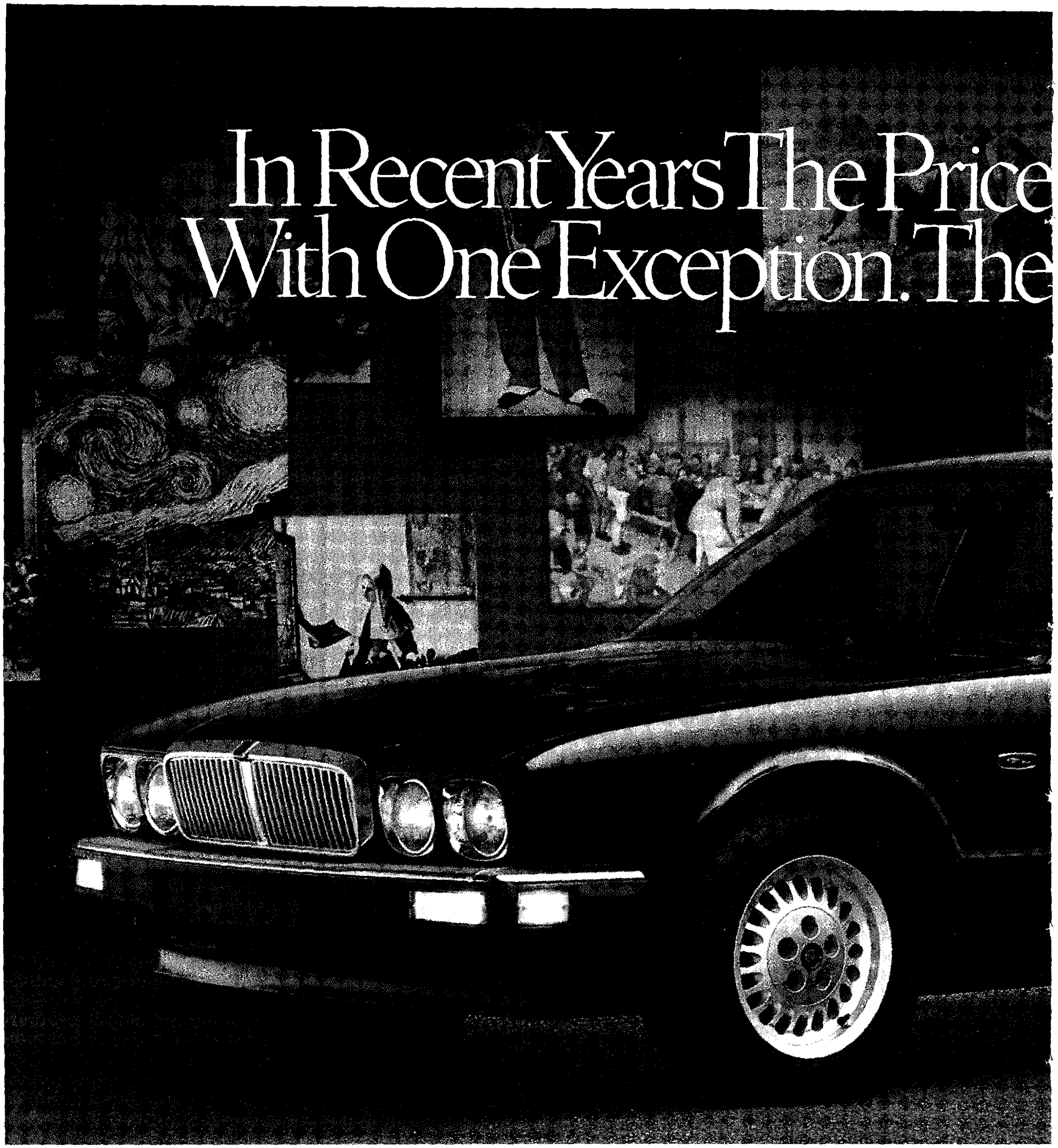

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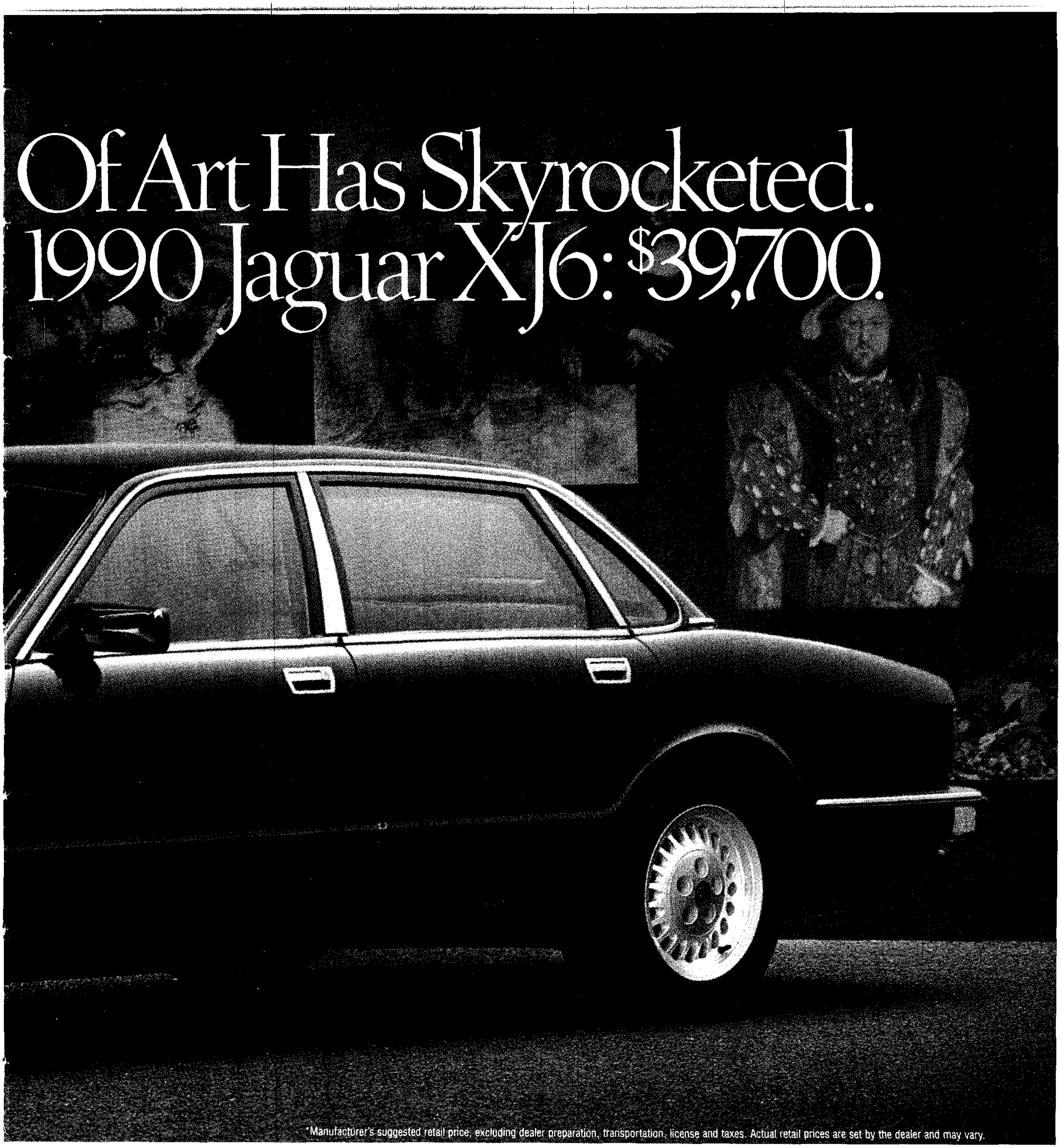
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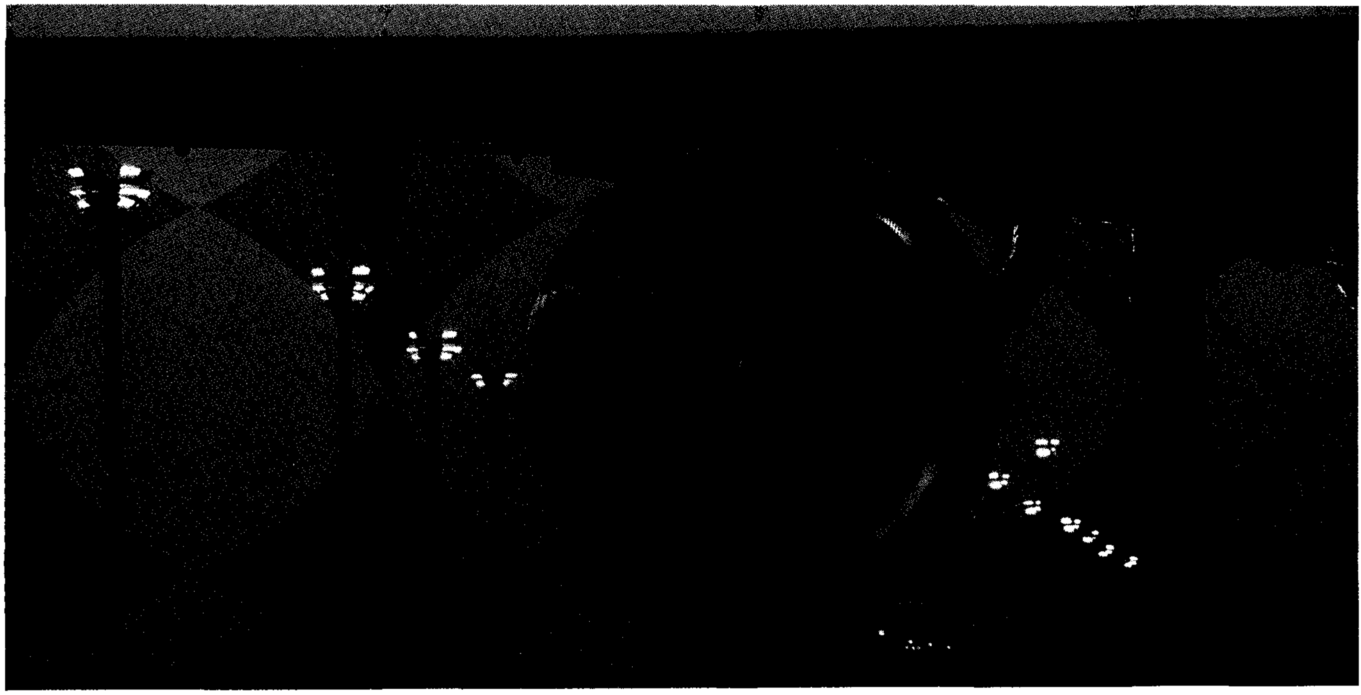

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

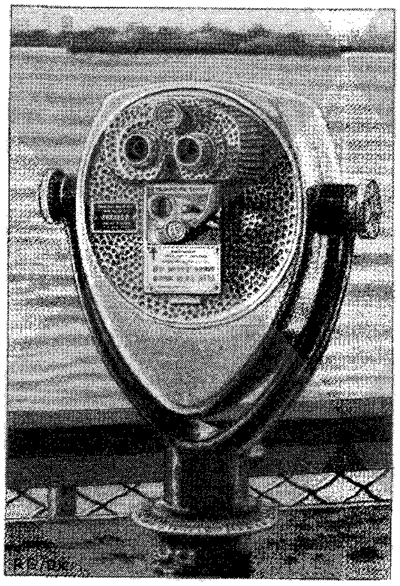
A FRIEND just back from the Soviet Union writes:

The Sunday in Moscow before the first really free local elections in Russia, the Ukraine, and Byelorussia was drizzly and mild. Heavy Moscow mud squished underfoot. Gray and white clouds scuttled south under a flickering white sun. I was told that it might be dangerous to go outside the hotel. The first big Moscow demonstration, on February 4th—held in Manezh Square, outside the Kremlin, and attended, it was said, by two hundred thousand people—had been sanctioned, even encouraged, by the authorities, but the one to be held this afternoon was not, and on TV there had been intimations of possible violence.

At midday, my wife and I and a friend bargained ourselves a cab (using the most acceptable currency among Moscow cabdrivers, a package of Marlboros) and were driven to a police line on Dimitrov Street. There we joined a large number of people walking toward the demonstration. They were dressed the way people dress for a Sunday picnic or a walk in the park, and they were calm and quiet; they glanced, as they passed, at riot police, holding rectangular metal shields, who were ranged along the street. As we moved ahead, the crowd thickened, and we began to notice young men holding up flags of different nationalities and different doctrines: the old Pan-Slavic Russian flag, the Georgian flag, the czarist St. Andrew's blue cross on a white field (now the flag of one of the Russian democratic groups), the red-and-black flag of the anarcho-syndicalists.

The people—later, the police would say they numbered a hundred thousand, and the American press would say fifty thousand—were milling easily on the plaza in front of the ornamental gate to Gorky Park, across from the vast, boxy Picture Gallery of the U.S.S.R., but were packed so densely on the Krimsky Bridge that it seemed in danger of collapsing into the Moscow River. Beyond the bridge, the crowd stretched on down the ring road, how far we could not see. A large clock, set in the top of a lamppost, said twelve-thirty-five. On a speakers' stand in front of the gate, a dozen or more men and women were taking turns at the microphone, under the gaze of an image of Lenin, and also under a large fixed banner announcing the Winter Ice Festival and an improvised sign giving the bank-account number of a fund for various refugees from turmoil among the nationalities.

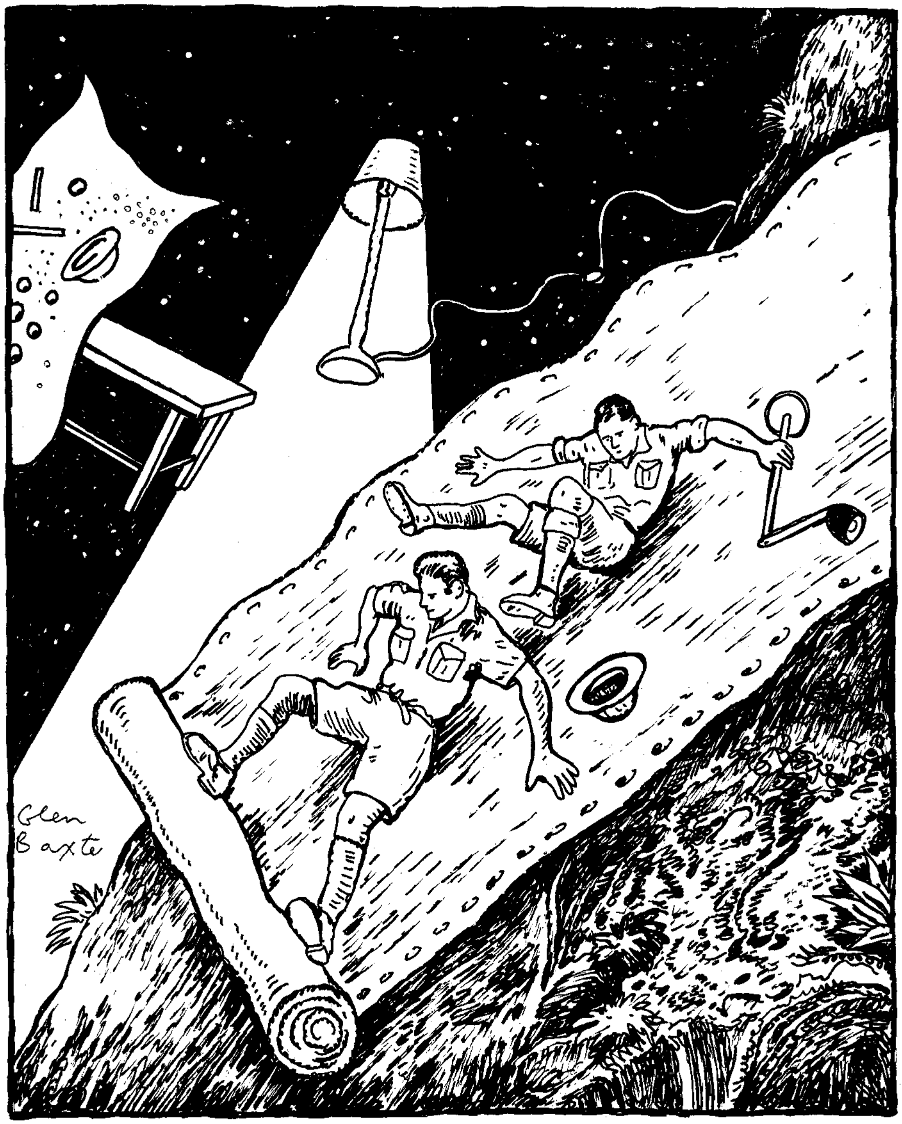
Speaker after speaker had a say and stood back. The speeches were full of the pointedness and bitterness that have come to characterize these opening months of what is intended to become Russian democracy. "The Party must relinquish its power not only on paper but in reality—acknowledge all legitimate parties and stop the activities of the K.G.B," one speaker said. Another said, "Let's not mar our march for democracy with violence. Be alert. Maintain your sense of discipline and order. We won't have Romania here!" And a third remarked, "There is an old saying that every nation gets the government it deserves. Do we really deserve this government?" When a speaker said, "The Ministry of Defense is the vanguard of the backlash against the people," a chant swept the crowd: "Down with Yazov! Down with Yazov!"—that is, Dmitri Yazov, the Minister of Defense. A speaker from the democratic faction of the Communist Party said, "You have shown courage coming out despite threats on TV all week. I am ashamed of our leaders because they have sold out. But we are all together and go to the polls on March 4th. March and make your choice and make sure the democratic forces prevail."



People in the crowd held up signs saying "Power to the People, Not the Party," "No to Demagogues and Lies," "The Poverty of the People and the Luxury of Officials Is the Disgrace of the Party," "Investigate Corruption in the Kremlin," "Politburo Resign," and, most appropriately, perhaps, "We Are Not Extremists, We Are the People."

The speakers on the platform began reading lists of candidates they said were pro-democracy, and some in the crowd made notes on folded sheets of paper. Other speakers took over. A woman from the city's Proletarian District implored people to get out on the streets and electioneer for democracy in their own districts; a man gave a telephone number to call for clarification about candidates, and shouted, "This is the holiday of democracy!" As if they were indeed on holiday, people began walking away while the speeches continued; many of them sauntered en masse toward Zubovsky Square.

I went on by myself, and paid another pack of Marlboros for a ride through back streets to Zubovsky Square, but was dropped off behind some police barriers at the foot of Kropotkin Street. Here the authorities had parked nine dirty snowplows and street-sweepers, apparently to block the crowd from turning down Kropotkin toward the Kremlin. Standing along the sides of the street were perhaps a hundred policemen in padded headgear and flak jackets, and carrying billy clubs. I happened to look up to my left at a peaked rooftop about four stories high, and noticed two young men, or boys, running across the roof, their knees slightly bent, and a third boy scooting on his bottom down the steep pitch of the roof, near a chimney; they were trying to find perches from which to see down onto the square. I showed my press card to one of the policemen, and said that I was American. "*Da!*" he said, smiling warmly at me, and he led me to three of his mates; they let me through a narrow, winding alley into the square, where speakers' voices seemed to be coming from loudspeakers on an L-shaped yellow construction crane high above the crowd. When I looked back, I could see the boys on the roof standing, black against the moving clouds, like antennas.



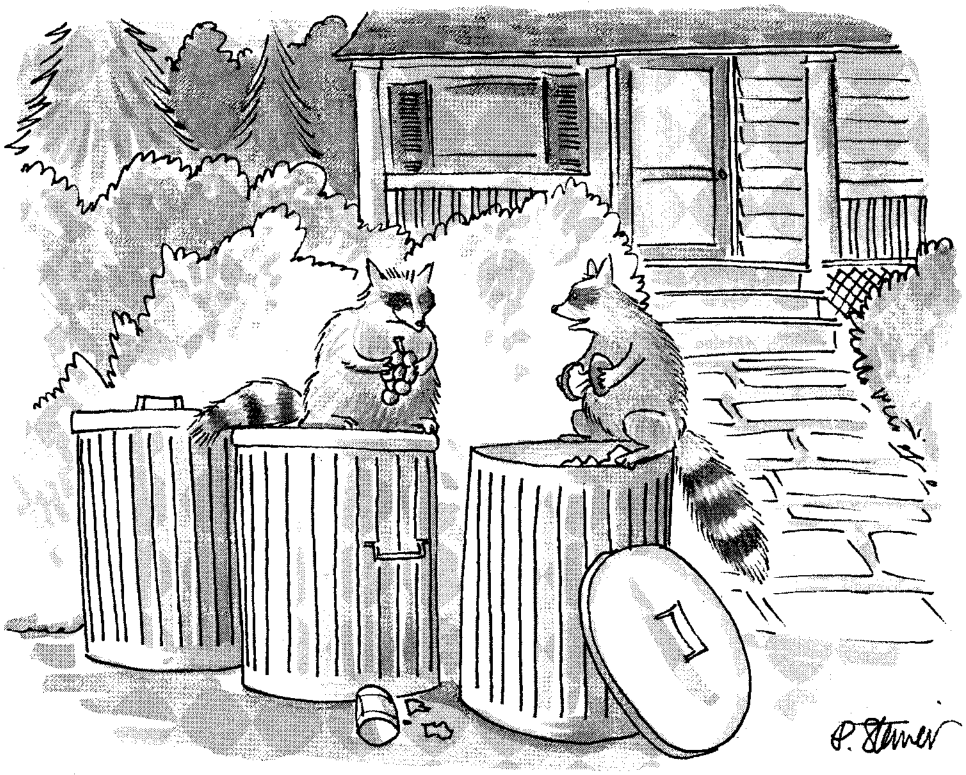
THE REDECORATION OF BASE CAMP III WAS THE MOST PERILOUS ASPECT OF THE ENTIRE EXPEDITION.

The faces around me were kind, weary, sad, guarded, thoughtful. People kept respectful distances from each other, leaving room for anyone who was willing to walk sideways to move easily among them. Not all were turned toward the sound of the speakers; they faced this way and that, occasionally murmuring in response to something they had heard.

At a quarter to three, the speaking ended, a song came over the loudspeakers, and the crowd began to thin out. Some people reached for each other's hands and formed a circle to dance; just as I was reaching for a hand, the music stopped. For a time then, in the slowly clearing square, people just stood about, looking at one another, some of them smiling across the opening distances. There had been no violence. A mother led away a child clutching a toy car. A man making a speech to ten or twelve people gathered around him exclaimed, "We are being brainwashed!" Elsewhere, a woman loudly and furiously told everyone who would listen that a certain deputy had betrayed the working people, and so had a certain historian.

An elderly man wearing a gray Russian hat introduced himself to me as Nikolai Nikiporets, professor of literature, and said, "It's hard to understand what has happened. Democracy and elections, the resistance of the ruling apparatus, nationalities struggling—Jews, Russians, Armenians. A lot of problems arose at one time." But he had been excited by the day—he thought a million people had come out—and he had been particularly struck by one speaker's declaration that Lenin was now the symbol of all that was reactionary in the U.S.S.R.

At ten minutes past three, police cars came honking into the square, their way of telling people to let traffic resume. I walked toward the Kremlin, along the museum of old Russian architecture which is called Kropotkin Street, and came upon a vacant pedestal, the base cracked and filthy, an empty alcove above it. To judge by reports on the election returns, reformers gained control of the municipal governments of Moscow and Leningrad, but those results and much else depend on runoffs to be held March 18th. In this nation of vacant pedestals—only Lenin is left, and he may be the next to go—people are beginning to grasp some power to govern. Still, it is far too early, as they well know, to celebrate the holiday of democracy.



"I think it's very considerate of people to separate their trash."

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FOR years, we'd wondered where the *Times* had picked up its characteristic tone of voice, and finally we decided that it was God's. Not the God of the Bible or the Koran but the God of a philosopher—Spinoza, perhaps. If Spinoza's God were to edit a newspaper, it might read like the *Times*. For that reason, the *Times'* recent obituary of Iphigene Ochs Sulzberger took us by surprise.

The picture of Mrs. Sulzberger, on page 1, was the same size as the picture of Violeta Chamorro celebrating her victory in the Nicaraguan election, also on page 1 that day. Mrs. Chamorro got a headline in a bigger typeface, but Mrs. Sulzberger got more column inches. It wasn't the size or the prominence of the story that surprised us, however, for Mrs. Sulzberger had been, successively, the daughter, the wife, the mother-in-law, and the mother of four *Times* publishers, whose tenures stretched from 1896 to now, and it was to be expected that the *Times* would have a lot to say about her life. It was what the *Times* said, and how it said it, that made us look twice. The obituary gave all the expected information: Mrs. Sulzberger's vital statistics; her career; her philanthropies; a historian's judgment (by the late Barbara Tuchman). But there was something else going on, which we first noticed in the sixth paragraph. "She also wrote droll letters to the editor on issues great and small, asking that they be thrown out if judged foolish, or published with only a pseudonym, usually the name of a dead relative or friend," the *Times* said. In the first column on page B6, the story continued: "When she was nearing 80, she began spending several days annually with grandchildren at schools in the Boston area, an effort to understand the outlook and life style of young people." At the bottom of the column, after telling us that "another of Mrs. Sulzberger's avocations involved the New York Botanical Garden," the *Times* said, "Her zeal reflected the delight she took in gardening and in flowers." We had found a pattern of apparently superfluous explanations, offered not, as the *Times* in its God voice usually offers them, to locate a fact but, rather, to locate an emotion.

If explanations seemed unnecessary at first glance (why else would someone take an interest in the New York Botanical Garden, apart from a delight in flowers?), on reflection, we saw that they were not. The emotions being described were not just feelings that Mrs. Sulzberger had for letters to the editor, young people, or gardens but also feelings that the *Times* had for her. Now we were well into page B6, and the emotions were coming thick and fast. We read, "Amid these activities she found time to be interested in polar explorations, an interest shared with her husband. One result was Adm. Richard E. Byrd's naming a body of water Sulzberger Bay; it is in Antarctica, off Marie Byrd Land. Its cold blue surface reflects a mountain, Mount Iphigene. . . . Mr. Ochs held that a newspaper office was no place for women, especially not for his daughter, of whom he felt protective. . . . Another [celebration of her ninetieth birthday] was held at the New York Botanical Garden, where 165 friends and relatives put on skits, sang songs and poured forth affection."

By the time we finished, we realized we had been reading (on a heroic scale) the same sort of obituary that the Middletown *Republican-Advertiser* would run on the death of its publisher's mother. The eagerness to supply all relevant (and some irrelevant) details was not reportorial overkill but an outpouring of the affection one feels for lovers, family, or other fellow-members of what Edmund Burke called "the little platoon." It's not the kind of outpouring you expect from God, but we were glad to hear it.

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Librettist

AL GRAND is a retired New York City schoolteacher who writes Yiddish librettos for Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. "They just pour out of me," he says. He can't explain exactly why he does it, except that he was born with a knack for it, and it's fun. He is not waging a one-man war against the extinction of Yiddish, and he does not intend his work to be taken altogether seriously. "Of course what I do is funny," he says. "The incongruity of it is funny. If I translated 'Die Fledermaus' into Yiddish—which, by the way, I've been asked to do—it would also be funny."

We met Mr. Grand for a hamburger the other day, because we wanted to see what kind of man would have the chutzpah to replace Gilbert's lyrics with Yiddish ones. Several days before our meeting he had mailed us two benign and dignified pictures of himself. One was a conventional black-and-white head shot of a handsome, clear-eyed man in his late fifties. The other was a photograph of a watercolor painting of Mr. Grand, plumed and magnificent, as Der Admiral in "Der Yiddisher Pinafore." When we met Mr. Grand in the flesh, he was wearing a tan raincoat and tinted aviator glasses and had a large brown folder under one arm. We went to the quietest pub we could think of, because Mr. Grand had promised to sing to us from his latest work, "Di Yam Gazlonim," a Yiddish version of "The Pirates of Penzance," and we wanted to be able to hear every word. We also wanted to hear how Mr. Grand came by his unique avocation.

He told us that he grew up in a Yiddish-speaking household on New Jersey Avenue, in East New York, and that he learned Yiddish the usual way—he absorbed it. His mother sang him the folk songs she remembered from her childhood, near Minsk, and the radio in the living room was always tuned to WEVD ("which stood for Eugene V. Debs, some Socialist or other, you can look it up"), then an all-Yiddish station, which broadcast Yiddish soap operas, music, and comedy sketches. When Mr. Grand was drafted, in 1954, he listed Yiddish as his second language. To this day, he associates Yiddish with happy memories of his parents and his childhood. "I have very warm and tender feelings about Yiddish," he said. "It is a very tender language."

In the summer of 1970, Mr. Grand responded to a casting call by the Gilbert and Sullivan Light Opera Company of Long Island, and landed a role in the chorus of "Pirates." After ten years of performing Gilbert and Sullivan in English in synagogues all over Nassau and Suffolk Counties, Mr. Grand suggested that the company try a Yiddish version. "The answer was a resounding no," he told us. "These people were Gilbert and Sullivan purists. They wouldn't change a single word—not a single syllable. But I kept pushing for it, and when the company relented enough to stage my miniature Yiddish 'H.M.S. Pinafore' the audiences loved it. They went wild. They cheered. They thanked us." The English-speaking purists seceded from the company about eight years ago and now perform here and there on Long Island a few times a year. The Gilbert and Sullivan Light Opera Company of Long Island plays practically every weekend, always in Yiddish, and sometimes travels as far as Northampton or Miami.

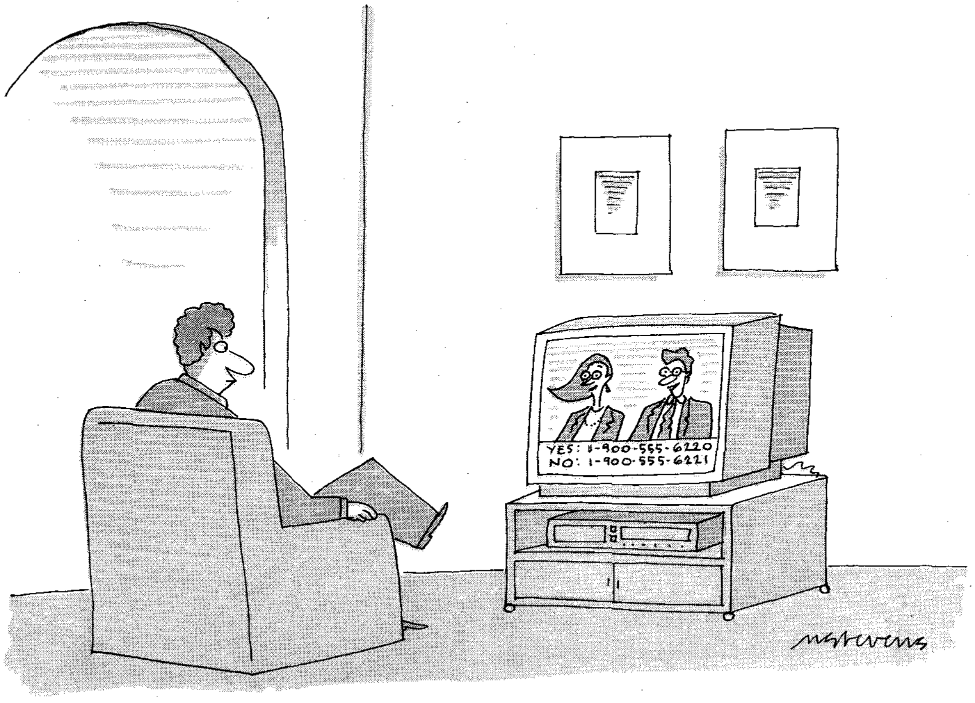
For the Yiddish versions to really work, Mr. Grand told us, he has to change meanings and contexts in small ways, so that the audience understands that it's not watching a bunch of English people singing about England in Yiddish. He anchors H.M.S. Pinafore in Tel Aviv's harbor, for example. In the original "Pirates," the nursemaid Ruth apprentices Frederic to a pirate instead of to a pilot, because she is hard of hearing; in Grand's version, Rivke mistakenly brings Fayvl to *gazlonim* (robbers) instead of to *rabonim* (rabbis). And while Gilbert's Major General knows math and history inside out, Der Groyser General reads Guy de Maupassant and bakes a mean honey cake.

Mr. Grand had his script of "Di Yam Gazlonim" in his folder, and after lunch he took it out, and flipped it open to the Major General's snappy tongue twister of a song. Leaning close to us, he began to sing, and to translate as he went along: "*Ikh bin der Groyser General un ikh bin oykh a guter Yid.* O.K., I am the Major General and I'm also a good Jew. *Ikh gey oysrekh'nen yetst mayn' ale mayles in a Yiddish lid.* And I'm going to enumerate all my good qualities in a Yiddish song. Hmm. It doesn't really work in English, does it?"

We weren't disappointed. Mr. Grand sounded fine; even the waitress stopped to listen. And the Yiddish words gave the familiar tune a strange new intimacy—as if it had been taken away, spruced up, and given back to us.

Beat

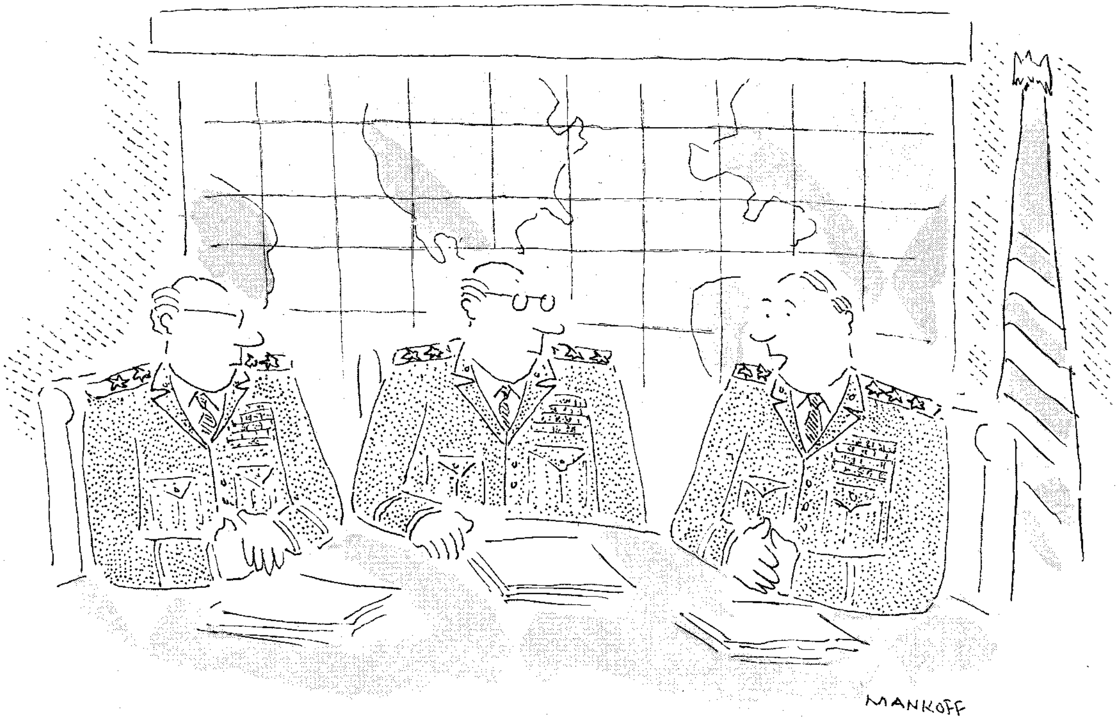
Pat Blashill invited us to come by his place the other night, equipped with the percussive unit of our choice, to howl at the moon. (The invitation said "Drum Party: B.Y.O. Drum.") Pat, who is a music writer, and his five loft-mates throw drum parties every few months. (They allow intervals for restoring amicable relations with the neighborhood and for letting their ear drums stop vibrating.) As usual, they were expecting about a hundred



"If you like Sally's new hairdo, dial 1-900-555-6220. If you don't like Sally's new hairdo, dial 1-900-555-6221."

friends and possibly the cops.

We arrived just as they were putting the finishing touches on their preparations: hoisting up flashing Christmas lights for visual syncopation; hanging empty Café Bustelo and Budweiser cans from a pipe that ran along the living-room ceiling; laying out a yellow metal chair, dented by previous beatings into an Oldenburg; and scattering plastic boxes labelled "PROPERTY OF U.S. POSTAL SERVICE" around the room. Wooden spoons and drumsticks were already strewn about, and so were copies of *Pulse*, *Turnstyle*, and "The Penguin Book of English Madrigals for Four Voices." Pat gave us his philosophy of throwing a drum party: "You don't want to control it, but you do want to hide the breakables."



"'No war' is hell, too."

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This party was something of a send-off for Ed Greer, a bassist who lives in the loft, and for the two other guys in his group, Miracle Room, which is about to head out on a European tour sponsored by The Knitting Factory, a performance space in SoHo. Their music relies heavily on materials scrounged from garbage dumps. Once, they based an entire show on taking a bullet-riddled car apart with power tools and loading it with smoke bombs; the finale consisted of their dragging the car offstage in a shower of sparks. Another instrument of their invention, which lasted a little longer, was an electrified packing-crate lid enhanced with a kalimba made out of a spatula and with springs that went *boing*. Ed, a crinkly-faced Irishman wearing an orange T-shirt and a matching earring, invited us to sit down with him and Stephen Marsh, one of his partners. They played a tape for us of an untitled song that the whole group had produced with just one instrument—a metal tube. (Holding it horizontally, Stephen moaned and breathed fiercely down one end; Rock Savage, the third member of the group, palmed the other end rhythmically; and Ed bopped the outside with sticks.) It sounded like a spelunker's nightmare. Lounging on Ed's bed, under a bust of a voluptuous woman constructed of chicken wire, they told us how they'd pared down their act to make it portable: Ed will manipulate a suitcase and its lid; Stephen will play an amped two-by-four strung with piano wire; and Rock will drift among oil drums, water bottles, and a rusty hot plate. A friend came in and asked, "Have you seen my hammer handles?"

We found Pat, and he showed us around the loft. It's on the top floor of a triangular building in the meat-market district. From the window of Pat's bedroom—a tip of the triangle—you can see a blood-red neon sign advertising the Old Homestead Restaurant, and a life-size model of a steer jutting from its façade. Once, Pat said, a friend brought two barrels from the street up to a drum party and they turned out to still contain meat slime. "Great sound, bad idea," he added. The loft is unconverted: the plumbing is exposed, the brick is unexposed, and someone has scrawled on the front door, "Abandon Hope All Ye Who Enter." Before Pat and his friends moved in, a few years ago, the place was a notorious club called The Toilet; that may explain the presence in their apartment of a torturer's cage, and also of an aquarium filled with mannequins' forearms.

Drummers began to assemble. A couple came in carrying a coffee table and four pool cues. A woman positioned herself on another table so that she could play a rack tom at her feet, reach the aluminum-can mobile above her, and get to work on the table, while she whistled. A friend of hers whacked a shoe (a black suède pump) on the table and the floor. A man called Fitch, who is the originator of "Songs of Love and Stuff," a tape that consists of gentle folk tunes interspersed with what sound like the screech of a malfunctioning TV, psychotic muttering, and retching, set up a floor tom. He hit it with such concentration that he was able to strip off his shirt without missing a note. A guy in a corner was strumming a guitar—not that anyone noticed. Stephen thumped a plastic water tank and sipped a beer. Paint chips and wood splinters began to fly. The coffee table started to look as if it were suffering from a dermatological disorder. People were dancing the Bump. The noise was so loud that we didn't so much hear it as feel it in our ribs. After an hour or two, we left with a headache. On our way out, we heard one man say to another, "They've definitely got a beat going, but is it a cadence?"

BO KNOWS FICTION

THE crowd in Madison Square Garden erupts when Bo appears at the mouth of the tunnel leading into the arena. The roar is nothing short of deafening as he makes his way across the floor, enveloped in the thunderous applause. There are sixteen thousand in the Garden, the smallest crowd Bo has performed in front of since a late-August doubleheader in Cleveland. But they make the most of their numbers, this raucous New York bunch—shouting, whooping, and stomping their feet as Bo tips his Raiders cap and waves. This humble act sends the decibel level even higher, and voices call out "Do it!" and "Write on, Bo!" until finally all sixteen thousand are chanting "Bo! Bo! Bo!" in one voice.

At the center of the arena is a raised wooden platform upon which sit a large oak desk and leather-covered chair. On the desk is a Smith-Corona electric, as the bunting draped around the platform announces. Next to the typewriter are several pencils sharpened to fine points, a dictionary, a thesaurus, and three bottles of Evian springwater. As Bo mounts the steps behind the platform and takes his seat, the response is tumultuous. Those in the back can finally see the man. The brothers are there, yelling and whistling and shouting "Yo, Bo!" and "My man!" and giving each other high fives. The professors from St. John's and C.C.N.Y. are just as loud, clapping their hands to a tomatoey redness. They've all come for the spectacle, the show, and Bo, of course, is the show.

In the press box, Marv Albert describes the scene. He has been hired to do the word-by-word for this event by National Public Radio. Joining him in the booth to provide the color commentary and expert analysis is Joyce Carol Oates—a noted author in her own right, and an admitted fan of today's center of attention. There is talk of a television special later in the tour if all goes well; undoubtedly it will be pay-per-view.

Marv says, "This building, this venerable structure, has seen its share of glory over the years, but I don't think I've ever seen anything like this, Joyce."

"Neither have I, Marv," Joyce replies. "And I've seen most of the big ones—Updike, Vonnegut, Bellow . . ."

"Let's not have you leave yourself off that list, Joyce," Marv cuts in.

Joyce beams, but of course the radio audience can't see this. Then she says, "I can tell you this, Marv: I've read in a lot of places, but I've never gotten a reception the likes of which Bo is getting now, not even in Iowa City."

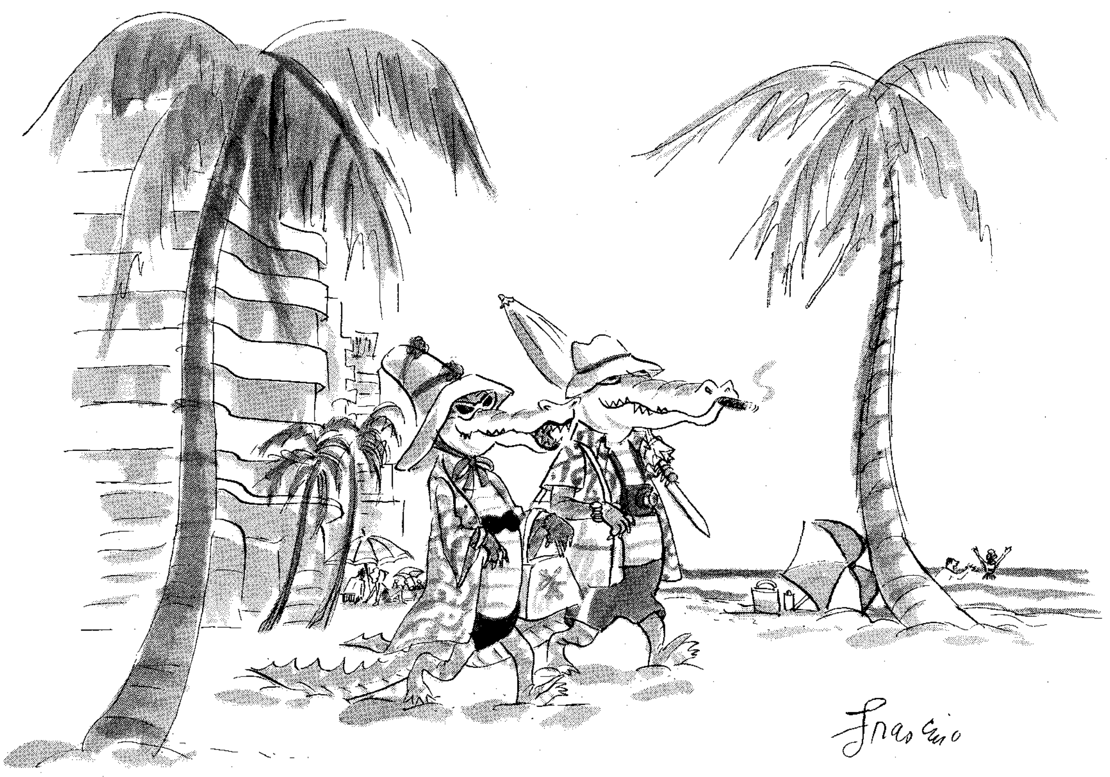
But this isn't a reading, as Marv is quick to remind the listeners. Those assembled have come to see Bo write, and to judge for themselves whether the tour, labelled "Bo Knows Fiction" by the media, is appropriately named.

"Is there even any precedent for this kind of hoopla, Joyce?" Marv asks. "For a writer, I mean."

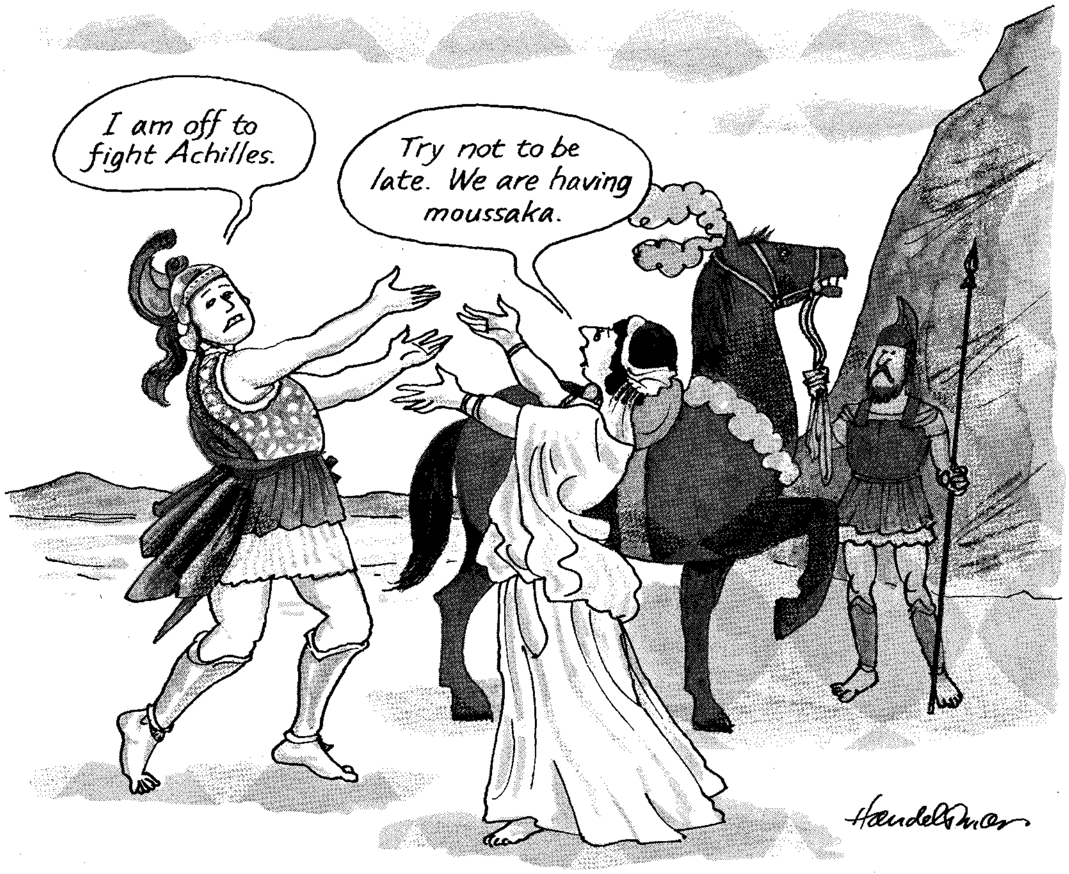
"Well . . ." Joyce ponders. "Dickens, perhaps, on his second trip to the States. But again, that was a reading tour. There's Hardy, of course—some still insist that the opening to "Tess" came during a public appearance in Dorchester—but he would have been performing practically in his own back yard." She pauses, then adds, "Neither compares."

On the platform Bo is ready to start. He has rolled a blank sheet of paper into the machine and now sits poised to begin. He picks up a pencil and chews at the eraser. The crowd has quieted and waits expectantly, as if in awe. Several of the professors are scribbling notes on small pads. Bo sets the pencil down and rests his hands in front of the typewriter. The crowd holds its collective breath. Then Bo sits back, exhales, and unzips his warmup jacket, which has "Smith-Corona" stitched over one pocket and "Just Type It" in large letters across his broad back. He pulls off the jacket and drapes it over the back of the chair, so that the motto remains prominently displayed. Bo knows endorsements, too.

Those assembled cannot help marvelling at the sculpted arms and shoulders. Bo is wearing a yellow T-shirt with "Write Naked" in oversized purple letters across his massive chest —a gift from the writing program at Louisiana State University,



"It's nice to get out of Okefenokee for a few days."


I am off to fight Achilles.
Try not to be late. We are having moussaka.

Man-Slaying Hector's Farewell to Eggplant-Cooking Andromache

where Bo has recently read. Even though it is an extra large, the shirt is stretched tight across Bo's thickly muscled torso. Marv says, "Certainly Bo is among the strongest of the twentieth-century writers, Joyce. Hemingway comes to mind, and maybe John Irving."

"Irving's not in Bo's class," Joyce answers matter-of-factly. "He's fit, to be sure, but Bo is just flat out the most densely muscled postmodernist we've got right now. It's not even close."

"He looks ready to begin," Marv says, cutting the discussion short. He is the consummate pro behind the mike.

At the desk Bo types, "You know me." The three words run across the scoreboard, and the crowd gasps, then breaks into wild applause before the "QUIET PLEASE" signs used for tennis matches in the Garden begin to flash. Order is quickly restored.

"A-mazing," Marv says. "What's happening here, Joyce?"

"Well, Marv, it's still a bit early to tell."

"Can we trust this voice?" Marv asks. "Has Bo done much in second-person narration?"

"Some, but not a lot," Joyce replies cautiously. "That's pretty much been given over to Rick Barthelme and a few others. I'm thinking we may be looking at some metafiction here."

Bo types, "I'm everywhere." The crowd is frenzied.

"Metafiction it is," Marv announces. "Nice call, Joyce."

"I thought as much," Joyce says, obviously pleased with herself.

On the floor, Bo sits back to think, and Marv takes the opportunity to outline the rest of Bo's itinerary. The New York stop is the second of six that Bo will be able to squeeze in between the end of the football season and spring training with the Kansas City Royals. Additional dates were scrapped when John Wathan, the Royals manager, insisted that Bo arrive in camp on time. "I have nothing against books," Wathan stated. "I've read some myself. But Bo needs to be here. He needs the at-bats."

The dates are spaced a week apart, to allow for rest and the rejuvenation of Bo's creative faculties. At each venue Bo will write a complete piece, with the work to be collected at the end of the tour for publication by E. P. Dutton, which is sponsoring the whole shebang along with the PEN American Center. Bo sold out the Boston Garden to kick off the tour, leaving the crowd limp with a six-page prose poem entitled "Caught Looking." Afterward, Bo noted that working beneath the Celtics' fabled championship banners conjured up images of washday in the Bronx for him.

Dates in Philadelphia, Iowa City, San Francisco, and L.A. round out the tour. The Iowa stop, at Carver-Hawkeye Arena, on the University of Iowa campus, has been sold out for weeks. Marv asks Joyce to put it all in perspective. "This is great for fiction," Joyce says. "It really is. Bo is drawing people in who might otherwise never open a book. And it'll go on all year. Every time Bo takes one deep, or plows into the end zone, the cash registers will start ringing. We'll all benefit from it; there's a trickle-down effect at work here. I mean, he's money in the bank. Just look at the endorsements he gets. Can the rest of us be far behind?"

"Bo is, undoubtedly, the hottest commodity going in fiction right now," Marv notes. Besides Smith-Corona, Bo endorses Parker Pens, Liquid Paper, and Hills Bros. Coffee. Word is out he's about to cut a deal with Apple to lend his name to their newest P.C., the Macbo. A poster is in the works as well.

"It's great," Joyce concludes. "I wish more top athletes wrote fiction."

"I am in pieces," Bo types. He has been working steadily and carefully. Marv relays the line to his listeners when Joyce finishes, then comments on some nifty foreshadowing. Anticipating the next line, he wings it: "I sense

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a metaphor coming here—*yessss!*"

"Exquisite," Joyce says.

Seated beside the platform, Barry Hannah, Bo's mentor, raises a fist. Earlier, Marv had talked with Barry. "I'll tell you, Marv," Barry said, "I'd rather have Bo for six weeks than most of these year-round M.F.A. bums. If he wrote full-time, look out." Barry has touched on a raging debate, and this thinly veiled shot is vintage Hannah. A faction within the Associated Writing Programs has condemned the tour, calling it callow showmanship, a deleterious stunt. Some in the A.W.P., most notably and vocally a group of M.A. students at Johns Hopkins, have gone so far as to call Bo a sham and a celebrity hack. Picketing has been reported.

"Sour grapes," Joyce says succinctly. "I'm with Barry on this one."

"I am whole," Bo writes, and then proceeds to knock off four quick paragraphs. It's all Marv can do to keep up. The crowd sits back, drained by Bo's prose, oohing and ahing as if they were watching fireworks.

"So what about Bo?" Marv asks Joyce at the next opportunity. "Place him for us, could you?"

"Well, Marv, I think the fact that he goes by one name speaks volumes, no pun intended. Of course, that's relatively common in sports. . . ."

Marv interrupts with examples. "Kareem, Reggie, Martina—"

"Right," Joyce cuts in. "But in literature it's almost unheard-of. I suspect you'd have to go back to Dante to find a comparable example."

Bo brings the crowd out of its stupor, dazzling them with two pages of tight dialogue in which the character Bo stands before a mirror, discussing himself with his reflection. Heads spin in the stands and eyes roll as Bo piles on layer after layer of concise phrases and clipped double-entendres. They clap incessantly, hooting and calling out as Bo the reflection gets the better of Bo the character. When the real Bo finally pauses, the crowd slumps back again, wondering how he can possibly wrap this up, yet knowing he will.

"Stunning," Joyce says, before Marv can even ask. Her voice is a hoarse whisper. She sounds as if she might cry.

While Bo ponders his ending, Marv cues up a taped interview in which Bo discusses his various careers. As is often the case, Bo refers to himself in the third person. "Writing is just Bo's hobby," Bo says. "Baseball and football are his life's work."

"Still," Marv says, "you've managed to balance them all quite well. You are probably the most athletically talented writer we've ever had. Certainly since Hemingway."

"If you call fishing a sport," Bo answers.

"Stephen Crane played baseball at Syracuse," Marv says. "Were you writing back at Auburn?"

"I was," Bo says. Then he adds, "But Crane was from a different time, so it's pointless to compare us. He was from the realism/dead-ball era. Two different things entirely." Bo goes on. "It's a lot more complex now than in Crane's time, or even since the forties, for that matter. Now we're *not only* dealing with the writing but with the whole aim and direction of fiction itself. I have to concern myself with that. With what's down the road." He pauses. "And then there's the whole aluminum-bat issue." There are other gems. Bo on Poe: "Edgar couldn't get past the drug testing we have today."

Marv stops the tape when he notices that Bo has begun to punch out an ending. The crowd becomes louder by the word, and Marv allows the cacophony to tell the story. Soon everyone is standing as Bo rapidly pounds the keys, until, with his final sentence, "We are all Bo," the crowd is delirious. Strangers trade elbow bashes in disbelief, marvelling at what they have just witnessed, and pound each other on the back in a transcendental moment of unity. Fathers lift their children onto their shoulders. Bic lighters are held high, and a steady chant of "More! More! More!" rains over Bo as he disappears into the tunnel beneath the stands—as if they might be able to call him back for a short-short or a poem. For this crowd, its celebrated toughness and cynicism quashed today, a haiku would be enough. But Bo has already left the building.

"He really came to write today," Joyce says finally.

"Words fail me," Marv admits. "This crowd is saying it all." And again they let the chanting tell the story, wondering if Iowa is ready for Bo.

—DAVID RACINE

CONSOLATION

LATE one summer afternoon, Milly Harmon and her older sister, Meg, spend a blessed, uncomplicated hour at a motel pool in Philadelphia, sitting in the shade of one of the big umbrella tables. They drink tropical punch from cans, and Milly nurses her baby, staring out at the impossibly silver agitation of water around the body of a young, dark swimmer, a boy with Spanish black hair and eyes. He's the only one in the pool. Across the way, an enormous woman in a red terry-cloth bikini lies on her stomach in the sun, her head resting on her folded arms. Milly's sister puts her own head down for a moment, then looks at Milly. "I feel fat," she says, low. "I look like that woman over there, I just know it."

"Be quiet," Milly says. "Your voice carries."

"Nobody can hear us," Meg says. She's always worried about weight, though she's nothing like the woman across the way. Her thighs are heavy, her hips wide, but she's big-boned, as their mother always says; she's not built to be skinny. Milly's the one who's skinny. When they were growing up, Meg often called her "stick." Sometimes it was an endearment and sometimes it was a jibe, depending on the circumstances. These days, Meg calls her "honey," and speaks to her with something like the careful tones of sympathy. Milly's husband was killed last September, when Milly was almost six months pregnant, and the two women have travelled here to see Milly's in-laws, to show them their grandchild, whom they have never seen.

The visit hasn't gone well. Things have been strained and awkward. Milly is exhausted and discouraged, so her sister has worked everything out, making arrangements for the evening, preserving these few hours in the day for the two of them and the baby. In a way, the baby's the problem: Milly would never have suspected that her husband's parents would react so peevishly, with such annoyance, to their only grandson—the only grandchild they will ever have.

Last night, when the baby started crying at dinner, both the Harmons seemed to sulk, and finally Wally's father excused himself and went to bed—went into his bedroom and turned a radio on. His dinner was still steaming on his plate; they hadn't even quite finished passing the food around. The music sounded through the walls of the small house, while Milly, Wally's mother, and Meg sat through the meal trying to be cordial to each other, the baby fussing between them.

Finally, Wally's mother said, "Perhaps if you nurse him."

"I just did," Milly told her.

"Well, he wants *something*."

"Babies cry," Meg put in, and the older woman looked at her as though she had said something off color.

"Hush," Milly said to the baby. "Be quiet." Then there seemed nothing left to say.

Mrs. Harmon's hands trembled over the lace edges of the tablecloth. "Can I get you anything?" she said.

At the end of the evening she took Milly by the elbow and murmured, "I'm afraid you'll have to forgive us; we're just not used to the commotion."

"Commotion," Meg said as they drove back to the motel. "Jesus. Commotion."

Milly looked down into the sleeping face of her son. "My little commotion," she said, feeling tired and sad.

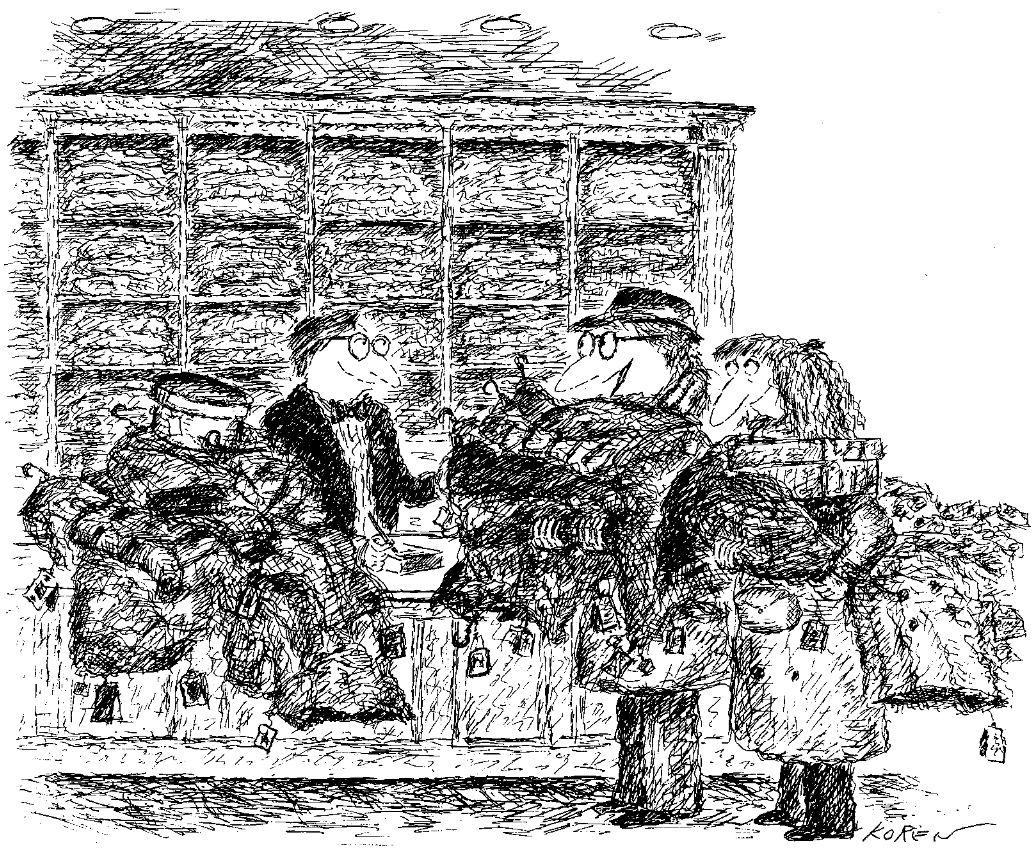
NOW Meg turns her head on her arms and gazes at the boy in the pool. "Maybe I'll go for a swim," she says.

"He's too young for you," Milly says.

Meg affects a forlorn sigh, then sits straight again. "You want me to take Zeke for a while?" The baby's name is Wally, after his dead father, but Meg calls him Zeke. She claims she's always called every baby Zeke, boy or girl, but she's especially fond of the name for *this* baby. This baby, she says, looks like a Zeke. Even Milly uses the name occasionally, as an endearment.

"He's not through nursing," Milly says.

It's been a hot day. Even now, at almost six o'clock, the sky is pale blue and crossed with thin, fleecy clouds that look like filaments of steam. Meg wants a tan, or says she does, but she's



"If there's any one lesson we've learned from the eighties, it's how to shop!"

worn a kimono all afternoon, and hasn't moved out of the shade. She's with Milly these days because her marriage is breaking up. It's an amicable divorce; there are no children. Meg says the whole thing simply collapsed of its own weight. Neither party is interested in anyone else, and there haven't been any ugly scenes or secrets. They just don't want to be married to each other anymore, see no future in it. She talks about how civilized the whole procedure has been, how even the lawyers are remarking on it, but Milly thinks she hears some sorrow in her voice. She thinks of two friends of hers who have split up twice since the warehouse fire that killed Wally, and whose explanations, each time, have seemed to preclude any possibility of reconciliation. Yet they're now living together, and sometimes, when Milly sees them, they seem happy.

"Did I tell you that Jane and Martin are back together?" she asks Meg.

"Again?"

Milly nods.

"Tied to each other on a rock in space," Meg says.

"What?"

"Come on, let me hold Zeke." Meg reaches for the baby. "He's through, isn't he?"

"He's asleep."

Meg pretends to pout, extending her arm across the table and putting her head down again. She makes a yawning sound. "Where are all the boys? Let's have some fun here, anyway—right? Let's get in a festive mood or something."

Milly removes the baby's tight little sucking mouth from her breast, and covers herself. The baby sleeps on, still sucking. "Look at this," she says to her sister.

Meg leans toward her to see. "What in the world do you think is wrong with them?"

She's talking about Wally's parents, of course. Milly shrugs. She doesn't feel comfortable discussing them. She wants the baby to have both sets of grandparents, and a part of her feels that this ambition is in some way laudatory—that the strange, stiff people she has brought her child all this way to see ought to appreciate what she's trying to do. She wonders if they harbor some resentment about how, before she would marry their son, she'd extracted a promise from him about not leaving Illinois, where her parents and her sister live. It's entirely possible that Wally's parents unconsciously blame her for his death, for the fact that his body lies far away in her family's plot in a cemetery in Lincoln, Illinois.

"Hey," Meg says.

"What."

"I asked a question. You drove all the way out here to see them and let them see their grandson, and they act like it's some kind of bother."

"They're just tired," Milly says. "Like we are."

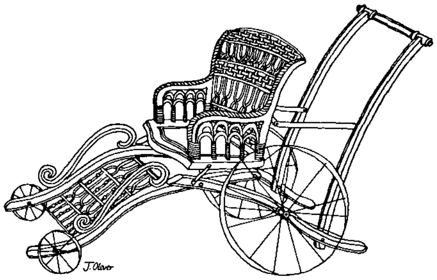
"Seven hundred miles of driving to sit by a motel pool."

"They're not used to having a baby around. It's awkward for them, too." Milly wishes her sister would stop. "Can't we just not worry it all to death?"

"Hey," Meg says. "It's your show."

Milly says, "We'll see them tonight and then we'll leave in the morning and that'll be that, O.K.?"

"I wonder what they're doing right now. You think they're watching the four o'clock movie or something? With their only grandson two miles away in a motel?"



In a parking lot on the other side of the highway, someone sets off a pack of firecrackers—they make a sound like small-machine-gun fire.

"All these years of independence," Meg says, "so people like us can have these wonderful private lives."

Milly smiles. It's always been Meg who defined things, who spoke out and offered opinions. Milly thinks of her sister as someone who knows the world, someone with experience she herself lacks, though Meg is only a little more than a year older. So much of her own life seems somehow duplicitous to her, as if the wish to please others and to be well thought of had somehow dulled the edges of her identity, and left her with nothing but a set of received impressions. She knows she loves the baby in her lap, and she knows she loved her husband—though during the four years of her marriage she was confused much of the time, and afraid of her own restlessness. It was only in the weeks just before Wally was taken from her that she felt most comfortably in love with him, glad of his presence in the house, and worried about the dangerous firefighting work that was, in fact, the agency of his death. She doesn't want to think about

THROUGH TWO WINDOWS

Comforting, in its way, how, wherever you may be,
the effect's so much the same—walking in Rome,

say, or Reykjavík, or one of those rust-red
Missouri river towns where we all were born and grew,

you merely glance right up into somebody's home,
catching the sky, out back, through two

sets of windows, and are in a sense home free:
free of everywhere you've lived, everything you've read.

It's a tinted sky—as if by the lives bound like a book
between its panes—and so not quite the one

you're standing under. No wonder, then, these odd unsorted feelings of exclusion and remorse . . .

all a small price to pay for any look
at the roof of another world, of course.

—Brad Leithauser

• •

D.J. VU
DIDN'T I JUST PLAY THIS RECORD A MINUTE AGO?

this now, and she marvels at how a moment of admiration for the expressiveness of her sister could lead to remembering that her husband died just as she was beginning to understand her need for him. She draws a little shuddering breath, and Meg frowns.

"You looked like something hurt you," Meg says. "You were thinking about Wally."

Milly nods.

"Zeke looks like him, don't you think?"

"I wasted so much time wondering if I loved him," Milly says.

"I think he was happy," her sister tells her.

In the pool, the boy splashes and dives, disappears; Milly watches the shimmery surface. He comes up on the other side, spits a stream of water, and climbs out. He's wearing tight, dark-blue bathing trunks.

"Come on," Meg says, reaching for the baby. "Let me have him."

"I don't want to wake him," Milly says.

Meg walks over to the edge of the pool, takes off her sandals, and dips the toe of one foot in, as though trying to gauge how cold the water is. She comes back, sits down, drops the sandals between her feet, and steps into them one by one. "You know what I think it is with the Harmons?" she says. "I think it's the war. I think the war got to them. That whole generation."

Milly ignores this and adjusts, slightly, the weight of the baby in her lap. "Zeke," she says. "Pretty Zeke."

The big woman across the way has labored up off her towel, and is making slow progress out of the pool area.

"Wonder if she's married," Meg says. "I think I'll have a pool party when the divorce is final."

The baby stirs in Milly's lap. She moves slightly, rocking her legs.

"We ought to live together permanently," Meg says.

"You want to keep living with us?"

"Sure, why not? Zeke and I get along. A divorced woman and a widow and one cool baby boy."

They're quiet awhile. Somewhere off beyond the trees at the end of the motel parking lot, more firecrackers go off. Meg stands, stretches. "I knew a guy once who swore he got drunk and slept on top of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. On Independence Day. Think of it."

"You didn't believe him," Milly says.

"I believed he had the idea. Whole culture's falling apart. Whole goddam thing."

"Do you really want to stay with us?" Milly asks her.

"I don't know. That's an idea, too." She ambles over to the pool again, then walks around it, out of the gate, to the small stairway leading up to their room. At the door of the room, she turns, shrugs, seems to wait. Milly lifts the baby to her shoulder, then rises. Meg is standing at the railing on the second level, her kimono partway open at the legs. Milly, approaching her, thinks she looks wonderful, and tells her so.

"I was just standing here wondering how long it'll take to drive you crazy if we keep living together," Meg says, opening the door to the room. Inside, in the air-conditioning, she flops down on the nearest bed. Milly puts the baby in the Port-a-Crib, and turns to see that the telephone message light is on. "Hey, look," she says.

Meg says, "Ten to one it's the Harmons cancelling out."

"No bet," Milly says, tucking the baby in. "Oh, I just want to go home, anyway."

Her sister dials the front desk, then sits cross-legged with pillows at her back, listening. "I don't believe this," she says.

IT turns out that there are two calls. One from the Harmons, who say they want to come earlier than planned, and one from Meg's estranged husband, Larry, who has apparently travelled here from Champaign, Illinois. When Meg calls the number he left, he answers, and she waves Milly out of the room. Milly takes the baby, who isn't quite awake, and walks back down to the pool. It's empty; the water is perfectly smooth. She sits down, watches the light shift on the surface, clouds moving across it in reflection.

It occurs to her that she might have to spend the rest of the trip on her own, and this thought causes a flutter at the pit of her stomach. She thinks of Larry, pulling this stunt, and she wonders why she didn't imagine that he might show up, her sister's casual talk of the divorce notwithstanding. He's always been prone to the grand gesture: once, after a particularly bad quarrel, he rented a van with loudspeakers and drove up and down the streets of Champaign, proclaiming his love. Milly remembers this, sitting by the empty pool, and feels oddly threatened.

It isn't long before Meg comes out

and calls her back. Meg is already trying to make herself presentable. What Larry wants, she tells Milly, what he pleaded for, is only that Meg agree to see him. He came to Philadelphia and began calling all the Harmons in the phone book, and when he got Wally's parents they gave him the number of the motel. "The whole thing's outlandish," she says, hurriedly brushing her hair. "I don't get it. We're almost final."

"Meg, I need you now," Milly says.

"Don't be ridiculous," says her sister.

"What're we going to do about the Harmons?"

"Larry says they asked him to say hello to you. Can you feature that? I mean, what in the world is that? It's like they don't expect to see you again."

"Yes," Milly says. "But they're coming."

"He called before, you know."

"Mr. Harmon?"

"No—Larry. He called just before we left. I didn't get it. I mean, he kept hinting around and I just didn't get it. I guess I told him we were coming to Philly."

The baby begins to whine and complain.

"Hey, Zeke," Meg says. She looks in the mirror. "Good Lord, I look like war," and then she's crying. She moves to the bed, sits down, still stroking her hair with the brush.

"Don't cry," Milly says. "You don't want to be all red-eyed, do you?"

"What the hell," Meg says. "I'm telling you, I don't care about it. I mean—I don't care. He's such a baby."

Milly is completely off balance. She has been the one in need on this trip, and now everything's turned around. "Here," she says, offering her sister a Kleenex. "You can't let him see you looking miserable."

"Do you believe this?" Meg says. "You think I should go with him?"

"He wants to take you somewhere?"

"I don't know."

"What about the Harmons?"

Meg looks at her. "What about them?"

"They're on their way here, too."

"I can't handle the Harmons anymore," Meg tells her.

"Who asked you to handle them?"

"You know what I mean."

"Well—are you just going to go off with Larry?"

"I don't know what he wants."

"For God's sake, Meg. He wouldn't come all this way just to tell you hello."

"That's what he said. He said, 'Hello.' "

"*Meg.*"

"I'm telling you, honey, I just don't have a clue."

IN a little while, Larry arrives, looking sheepish and expectant. Milly lets him in, and accepts his clumsy embrace, explaining that Meg is in the bathroom changing out of her bathing suit.

"Hey," he says, "I brought mine with me."

"She'll be out in a minute."

"Is she mad at me?" he asks.

"She's just changing," Milly tells him.

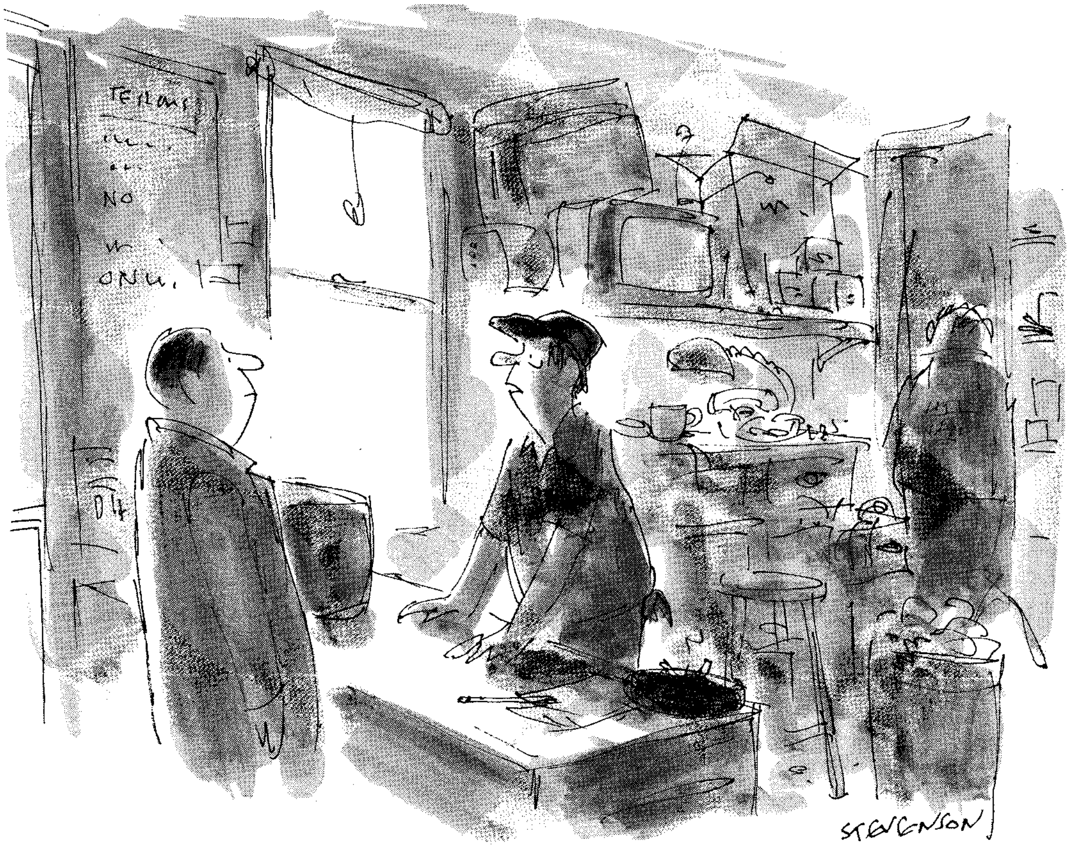
He looks around the room, walks over to the Port-a-Crib, and stands there making little cooing sounds. "He's smiling at me. Look at that."

"He smiles a lot." She moves to the other side of the crib and watches him make funny faces at the baby. Larry is a fair, willowy man, and though he's older than Milly she has always felt a tenderness toward him for his obvious unease with her, for the way Meg orders him around, and for his boyish romantic fragility—which, she realizes now, reminds her a little of Wally. It's in the moment she wishes he hadn't come here that she thinks of this, and abruptly she has an urge to reach across the crib and touch his wrist, as if to make up for some wrong she's done. He leans down and puts one finger into the baby's hand. "Look at that," he says. "Quite a grip. Boy's going to be a linebacker."

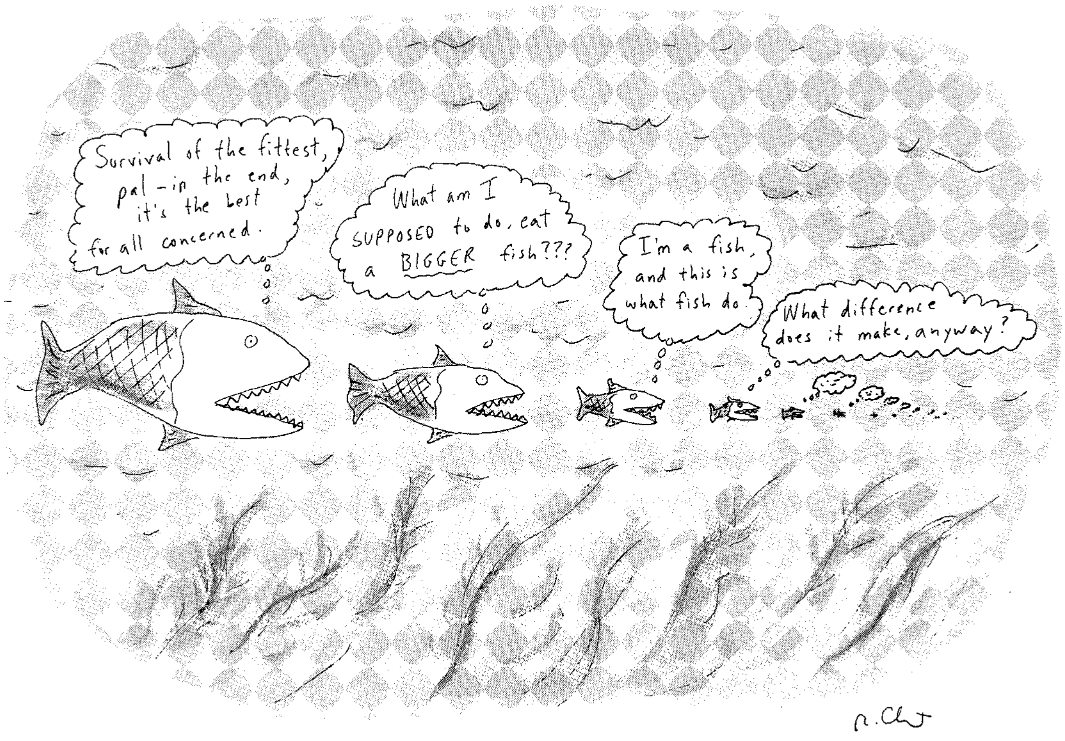
"He's small for his age," Milly tells him.

"It's not the size. It's the strength."

She says nothing. She wishes Meg would come out of the bathroom. Larry pats the baby's forehead,



"Just so you understand in advance—we're not old-time craftsmen, and we don't take pride in our work."


Survival of the fittest, pal—in the end, it's the best for all concerned.
What am I supposed to do, eat a BIGGER fish???
I'm a fish, and this is what fish do.
What difference does it make, anyway?

then moves to the windows and, holding the drapes back, looks out.

"Pretty," he says. "Looks like it'll be a nice, clear night for fireworks."

For the past year or so, Larry has worked in a shoe store in Urbana, and he's gone through several other jobs, though he often talks about signing up for English courses at the junior college and getting started on a career. He wants to save money for school, but in five years he hasn't managed to save enough for one course. He explains himself in terms of his appetite for life: he's unable to put off the present, and frugality sometimes suffers. Meg has often talked about him with a kind of wonder at his capacity for pleasure. It's not a thing she would necessarily want to change. He can make her laugh. And he writes poems to her, to women in general, though according to Meg they're not very good poems.

The truth is, he's an amiable, dreamy young man without an ounce of objectivity about himself, and what he wears on this occasion seems to illustrate this. His bohemian dress is embarrassingly like a costume—the bright-red scarf and black beret and jeans; the sleeveless turtleneck shirt, its dark colors bleeding into each other across the front.

"So," he says, turning from the windows. "Are the grandparents around?"

She draws in a breath, deciding to tell him about the Harmons, but Meg comes out of the bathroom at last. She's wearing the kimono, open, showing the white shorts and blouse she's changed into.

Larry stands straight, clears his throat. "God, Meg. You look great," he says.

Meg sits down on the bed nearest the door and lights a cigarette. "Larry, what're you trying to pull here?"

"Nothing," he says. He hasn't moved. He's standing by the windows. "I just wanted to see you again. I thought Philadelphia on the Fourth might be good."

"O.K.," Meg says, drawing on the cigarette.

"You know me," he says. "I have a hard time saying this sort of stuff up close."

"What sort of stuff, Larry?"

"I'll take Zeke for a walk," Milly says.

"I can't believe this," Meg says, blowing smoke.

Milly gathers up the baby, but Larry stops her. "You don't have to go."

"Stay," Meg tells her.

"I thought I'd go out and meet the Harmons."

"Come on, what are you doing here," Meg says to Larry.

"You don't know?"

"What if I need you to tell me anyway," she says.

He hesitates, then reaches into his jeans and brings out a piece of folded paper. "Here."

Meg takes it, but doesn't open it.

"Aren't you going to read it?"

"I can't read it with you watching me like that. Jesus, Larry—what in the world's going through your mind?"

"I started thinking about it being final," he says, looking down. Milly moves to the other side of the room, to her own bed, still holding the baby.

"I won't read it with you standing here," Meg says.

Larry reaches for the door. "I'll be outside," he says.

Milly, turning to sit with her back to them, hears the door close quietly. She looks at Meg, who's sitting against the headboard of the other bed, the folded paper in her lap.

"Aren't you going to read it?"

"I'm embarrassed for him."

Milly recalls her own, secret, embarrassment at the unattractive, hyenalike note poor Wally struck every time he laughed. "It was probably done with love," she says.

Meg offers her the piece of paper across the space between the two beds. "You read it to me."

"I can't do that, Meg. It's private. I shouldn't even be here."

Meg opens the folded paper and reads silently. "Jesus," she says. "Listen to this."

"Meg," Milly says.

"You're my sister. Listen. 'When I began to think our time was really finally up/ My chagrined regretful eyes lumbered tightly shut.' Lumbered, for God's sake."

Milly says nothing.

"My eyes lumbered shut."

And quite suddenly the two of them are laughing. They laugh quietly, or they try to. Milly sets Zeke down on his back, and pulls a pillow to her face in an attempt to muffle herself, and when she looks up she sees Meg on all fours with her blanket pulled over her head, and, beyond her, Larry's faint shadow through the window drapes. He's pacing. He stops and leans on the railing, looking out at the pool.

"Shhh," Meg says, finally. "There's more." She sits straight, composes herself, pushes the hair back from her face, and holds up the now crumpled piece of paper. "Oh," she says. "Ready?"

"Meg, he's right there."

Meg looks. "He can't hear anything."

"Whisper," Milly says.

Meg reads. " 'I cried and sighed under the lids of these lonely eyes/ Because I knew I'd miss your lavish thighs.' "

For a few moments, they can say nothing. Milly, coughing and sputtering into the cottony smell of the sheets, has a moment of perceiving, perhaps by contrast, the unhappiness she's lived during these last few months—how bad this terrible time has been—and it occurs to her that she's managed it long enough not to notice it, quite. Everything is suffused with an ache she's grown accustomed to, and now it's as if she's flying in the face of it all. She laughs more deeply than she ever has, laughs even as she thinks of the Harmons, and of her grief. She's woozy from lack of air and breath. At last she sits up, and wipes her eyes with part of the pillowcase, still laughing. The baby's fussing, so she works to stop, to gain some control of herself. She realizes that Meg is in the bathroom, running water. Then Meg comes out and offers her a wet washcloth.

"I didn't see you go in there."

"Quiet," Meg says. "Don't get me started again."

Milly holds the baby on one arm. "I have to feed Zeke some more."

"So once more I don't get to hold him."

They look at each other.

"Poor Larry," Meg says. "Married to a philistine. But—just maybe—he did the right thing, coming here."

"You don't suppose he heard us."

"I don't suppose it matters if he did. He'd never believe we could laugh at one of his *poems*."

"Oh, Meg—that's so mean."

"It's the truth. There are some things, honey, that love just won't change."

Now it's as if they are both suddenly aware of another context for these words—both thinking about Wally. They gaze at each other. But then the moment passes. They turn to the window, and Meg says, "Is Larry out there? What'll I tell him, anyway?" She crosses the room and looks through the little peephole in the door. "God," she says, "the Harmons are here."

MRS. HARMON is standing in front of the door with Larry, who has apparently begun explaining himself. Larry turns and takes Meg by the arm as she and Milly come out. "All the way from Champaign to head it off," he says to Mrs. Harmon. "I hope I just avoided making the biggest mistake of my life."

"God," Meg says to him. "If only you had money." She laughs at her own joke. Mrs. Harmon steps around her to take the baby's hand. She looks up at Milly. "I'm afraid we went overboard," she says. "We went shopping for the baby."

d. ehrenberg

Milly nods at her. There's confusion now: Larry and Meg are talking, seeming about to argue. Larry wants to know what Meg thinks of the poem, but Milly doesn't hear what she says to him. Mrs. Harmon is apologizing for coming earlier than planned.

"It's only an hour or so," Milly says, and then wonders if that didn't sound somehow ungracious. She can't think of anything else to say. And then she turns to see Mr. Harmon labor-

ANTON BRUCKNER

At daybreak, the smell of clover rises from low meadows.
Baroque churches impress the ground.
Peasant carts ride through fog, geese quietly lament.
The Danube flows over flat stones, rehearsing
elocution like a timid Demosthenes.
Mice run a race in tunnels of hay.
In farmyard dark, lamps undulate,
scared shadows skim along the walls.
Sparrows strive to sound like human voices.
The horses' coats are tousled; in the stable, yellow straw.
Currents of breath are steaming, purple hands are numb.
The world is too corporeal, selfsame, dense,
its mutations have no design;
mirrors grow weary of reflecting
the same to and fro. Even echoes stammer.
At the door of a whitewashed house, a boy is standing
with an ugly face and a too thick neck.
He is good and pious, but unappealing to girls.
A small bundle is on his back, heavy boots on his feet.
Raindrops fall from the roof in a quizzical key.
The well pulley squeaks, chairs speak in small voices.
Where is the line dividing the spheres, where are the sentries?
What do the two elements lead and oxygen have in common,
the torpid stone walls, and music that flies
breathless, as if to free itself from the burdens
of oboes, tubas, horns, and yet is bound to them
perpetually, so that the drums made of hide
will run together with the light spears of violas,
will float in the rhythm of a sleepy dance?
And in that breathless race, which is not a flight,
the shimmering Danube will vanish, and the church of Linz
with its double belfries, and even great Vienna, with the gold grain
of the Emperor sown in fertile gardens, will be left behind
as meaningless as a dot on the map.
Anton Bruckner is leaving home.

—ADAM ZAGAJEWSKI

(*Translated, from the Polish, by Renata Gorczynski and Benjamin Ivry.*)

• •

ing up the stairs. He's carrying a giant Teddy bear with a red ribbon wrapped around its thick middle. He has it over his shoulder, like a man lugging a body. The bear is bigger than he is, and the muscles of his neck are straining as he sets it down. "This is for Wally," he says with a smile that seems sad. His eyes are moist. He puts one arm around his wife's puffy midriff and says, "I mean—if it's O.K."

"I don't want to be divorced," Larry is saying to Meg.

Milly looks at the Harmons, at the hopeful, nervous expressions on their faces, and then she tries to give them the satisfaction of her best appreciation: she marvels at the size and the softness of the big Teddy, and she holds the baby up to it, saying, "See? See?"

"It's quite impractical, of course," says Mr. Harmon.

"We couldn't pass it up," his wife says. "We have some other things in the car."

"I don't know where we'll put it," says Milly.

"We can keep it here," Mrs. Harmon hurries to say. She's holding on to her husband, and her pinched, unhappy features make her look almost frightened. Mr. Harmon raises the hand that had been around her waist and lightly, reassuringly, clasps her shoulder. He stands there, tall and straight in that intentionally ramrod-stiff way of his—the stance, he would say, of an old military man, which happens to be exactly what he is. His wife stands closer to him, murmurs something about the fireworks going off in the distance. It seems to Milly that they're both quite changed; it's as if they've come with bad news, and are worried about hurting her with more of it. Then she realizes what it is they are trying to give her, in what is apparently the only way they know how, and she remembers that they have been attempting to get used to the loss of their only child. She feels her throat constrict, and when Larry reaches for her sister, putting his long, boy's arms around Meg, it's as if this embrace is somehow the expression of what they all feel. The Harmons are gazing at the baby now. Still arm in arm.

"Yes," Milly tells them, her voice trembling. "Yes, of course. You—we could keep it here."

Meg and Larry are leaning against the railing, in their embrace. It strikes Milly that she's the only one of these people without a lover, without someone to stand with. She lifts the baby to her shoulder and looks away from them all, but only for a moment. Far off, the sky is turning dusky; it's getting near the time for rockets and exploding blooms of color.

"Dinner for everyone," Mr. Harmon says, his voice full of brave cheerfulness. He leans close to Milly, and speaks to the child. "And you, young fellow, you'll have to wait awhile."

"We'll eat at the motel restaurant and then watch the fireworks," says Mrs. Harmon. "We could sit right here on the balcony and see it all."

Meg touches the arm of the Teddy bear. "Thing's as big as a *real* bear," she says.

"I feel like fireworks," Larry says.

"They put on quite a show," says Mr. Harmon. "There used to be a big field out this way, before they widened the street. Big field of grass, and people would come—"

"We brought Wally here when he was a little boy," Mrs. Harmon says. "He—they had a band one year."

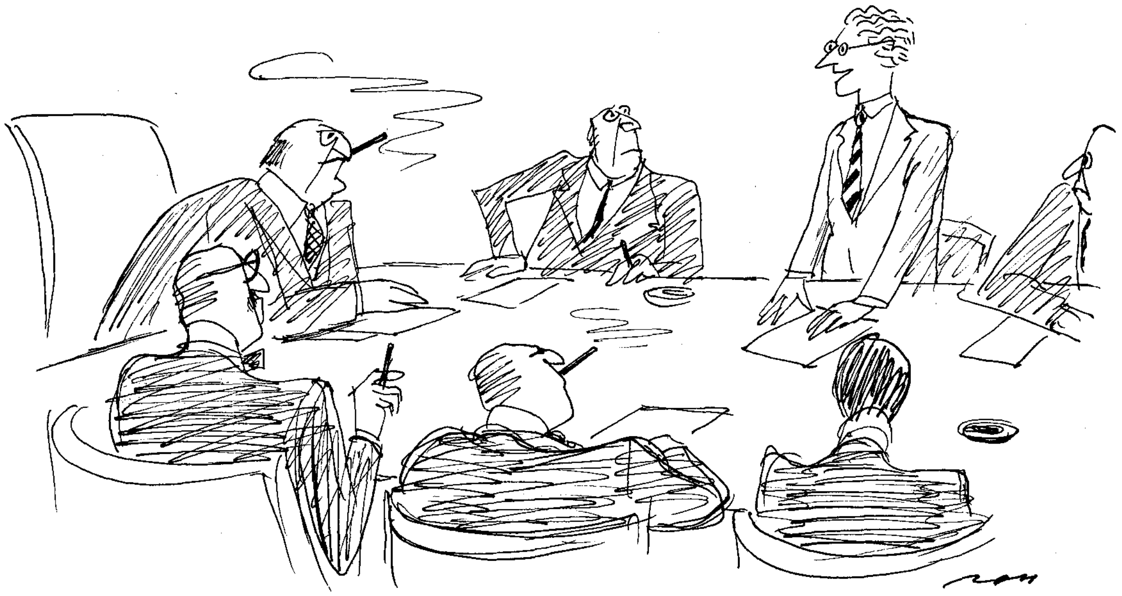
"They still put on quite a show," Mr. Harmon says, squeezing his wife's shoulder.

Milly faces him, faces them, fighting back any sadness. In the next moment, without really thinking about it, she steps forward slightly and offers her child to Mrs. Harmon. Mrs. Harmon tries to speak, but can't. Her husband clears his throat, lifts the big Teddy bear as if to show it to everyone again. But he, too, is unable to speak. He sets it down, and seems momentarily confused. Milly lightly grasps his arm above the elbow, and steps forward to watch her mother-in-law cradle the baby. Mrs. Harmon makes a slight swinging motion, looking at her husband, and then at Milly. "Such a pretty boy," she says.

Mr. Harmon says, "A handsome boy."

Then, for a small space, no one says anything. Meg and Larry move closer. They all stand there on the motel balcony with the enormous Teddy bear propped against the railing. They are quiet, almost shy, not quite looking at each other, and for the moment it's as if, like the crowds beginning to gather on the roofs of the low buildings across the street, they have come here only to wait for what will soon be happening in every quarter of the city of brotherly love.

—RICHARD BAUSCH



"I think we should employ more powerful levers and more subtle webs."

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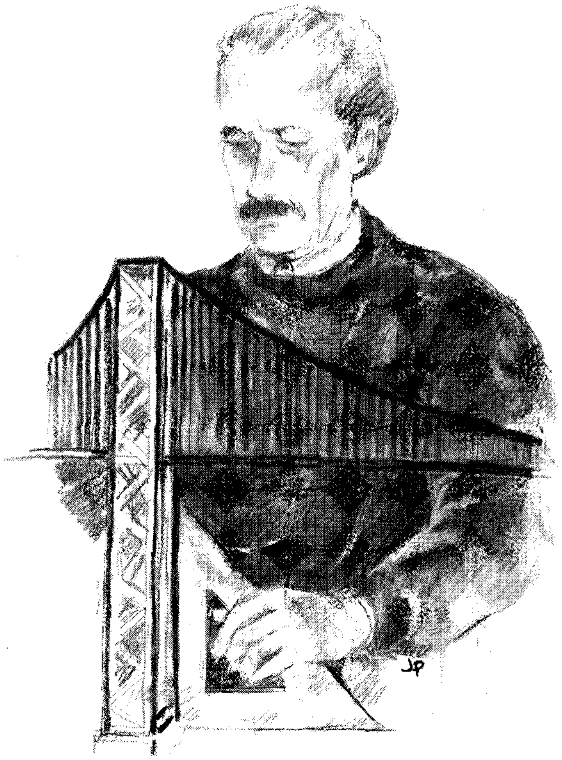
PROFILES

OPEN, AVAILABLE, USEFUL



Siah Armajani

UNTIL the Irene Hixon Whitney Bridge actually went up, a lot of people in the twin cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul did not seem to understand that it was going to be a real, functioning bridge. The man who had conceived and designed it was an artist, for one thing, and who had ever heard of a bridge designed by an artist? One end of the structure, moreover, was to be situated in the brand-new sculpture garden of the Walker Art Center, in Minneapolis, and this led some citizens to assume that it was going to be one of those "environmental" sculptures which city-dwellers have to cope with from time to time. According to Siah Armajani, the artist in charge of the project, "It did not become a bridge until the first person walked across it."

Since its formal opening, in September, 1988, however, the bridge, a three-hundred-and-seventy-five-foot pedestrian walkway that spans sixteen lanes of traffic and reconnects two areas of Minneapolis which were sundered nearly twenty years ago by Interstate Highway 94, has become a huge hit with the public. Joggers, cyclists, mothers with strollers, school kids, lovers, tourists, museumgoers, office workers on their way to work—everyone uses the bridge. Even in the dead of the Minneapolis winter, when the thermometer seems permanently stuck below zero, and you hesitate to invite guests for dinner because their cars may not start when they try to go home and you will have them for the night as well, the walkway is rarely deserted. I walked across it for the first time last spring, with Armajani as my guide, and what struck me most euphorically was its color scheme. From the Walker Art Center to its midpoint, the bridge is painted a pale, luminous yellow; the other half, which leads to a grassy swale called Loring Park, is light blue—Armajani calls it baby blue. Where the yellow stops and the blue begins, you feel as though you were moving from one pleasant room into another, which is just what the artist had in mind. "The yellow is from Monticello," he told me. "Jefferson called it the color of wheat, of the harvest, but it is also the color of happiness. The blue is just—well, the sky. Minneapolis has these long, gray winters, so I felt the colors should be light."

The Minnesota Department of Transportation, which owns the bridge, and put up half the million six hundred thousand dollars required to build it (the rest came from the Wheelock Whitney family, in Minneapolis), notified Armajani at one point prior to construction that baby blue and Jefferson yellow did not figure in its regulation palette of colors. The department was not making an issue of this; it just thought Armajani ought to know. Nobody tried to make him change his color choice, or questioned any of his aesthetic decisions, and he found this truly remarkable. Armajani, whose natural reticence is at odds with his appearance—he has dark curly hair, a full mustache, a broken nose, and a piratical grin—is enormously pleased to report that he was treated as a fully qualified professional by the engineers, the steelworkers, and everyone else who worked on the project. He treated them with equal respect, and he was willing to alter his plans when the situation required it. He had at first opposed the addition of access ramps for the handicapped; he wanted, instead, hydraulic elevators at either end of the bridge. But when he was told that the elevators would probably freeze up in subzero weather he went ahead and designed access ramps, and he now agrees that they have enhanced the look of the bridge—curving, ascending ramps that play off against the cool right-angled geometry of the structure and the reverse curve of its two great catenary arches, one convex and the other concave. The substitution of pressure-treated unpainted pine boards for the steel flooring that Armajani had intended originally (it, too, would have iced up in cold weather) turned out to be another bonus. The sound and feel of sturdy wooden beams underfoot increase the pleasure of walking the bridge. Other pleasures abound: benches made in the same clean style as the rest of the bridge; places where the walkway widens and strollers can pause to take in the passing scene; superb views of the Walker's new sculpture garden, which was designed by the architect Edward Larrabee Barnes. Armajani commissioned the poet John Ashbery, whose work he admires, to write a text for the bridge; the hundred-and-thirty-five-word text is set into the wooden floor, in individual bronze letters.

Siah Armajani is an American citizen, naturalized in 1967, but he was born and raised in Teheran, and, like many Iranians, he often makes his points by telling stories. When the painting contractors were getting ready to put the final colors on the bridge, he told me, the chief inspector, a man named Dave, climbed up the scaffolding to make sure that the undercoat had been applied correctly. He climbed down again shaking his head, and said it wasn't good enough. "What are you talking about?" the head painter demanded. He and his men had been painting bridges for twenty years, he said; they knew their trade. "This is different," Dave said. "This is a work of art." The painter said, "Just what the hell does that mean?"

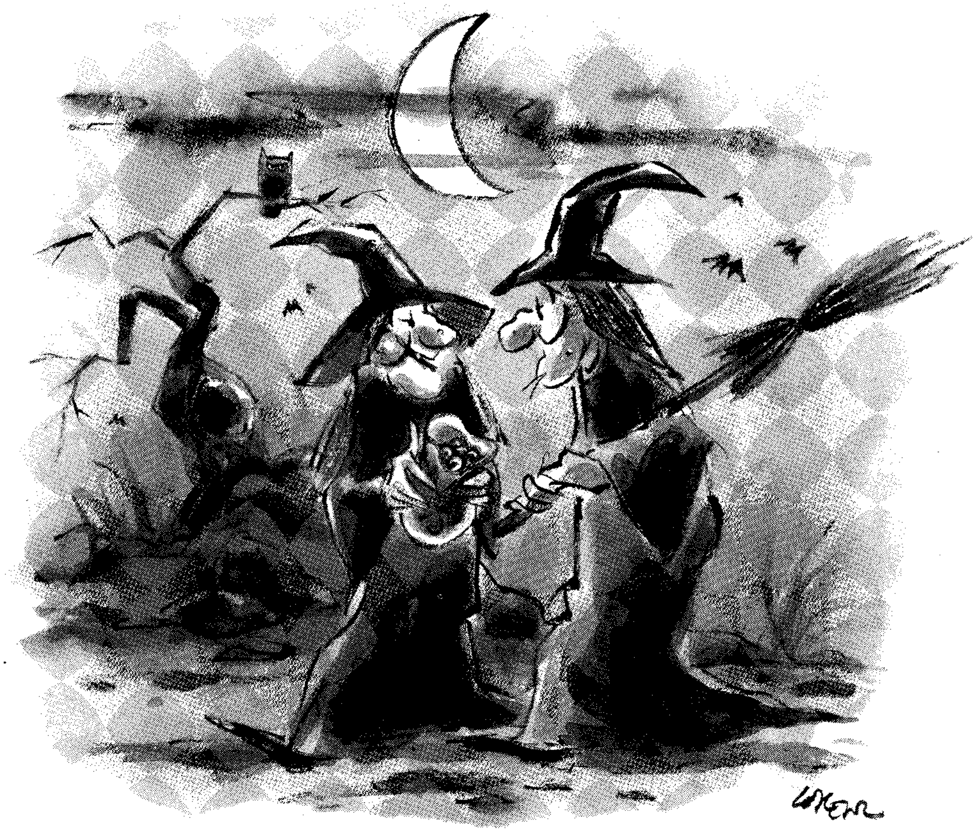
This is a question that Armajani has been asking himself for years. As one of the leading practitioners and theorists of a new form of public art that has emerged during the last decade in this country, Armajani has given a lot of thought to the redefinition of art in late-twentieth-century American society. He has little or no interest in producing high-priced objects for wealthy buyers. Armajani and a number of other, like-minded artists—the list includes Robert Irwin, Mary Miss, Nancy Holt, Richard Fleischner, George Trakas, Jackie Ferrara, Athena Tacha, Elyn Zimmerman, and the late Scott Burton—have devoted themselves almost exclusively to working on projects in public spaces, usually in collaboration with architects, city planners, real-estate developers, landscape architects, engineers, and city officials. These artists have had a hand in the designing or the redesigning of parks, playgrounds, gardens, indoor and outdoor plazas, traffic interchanges, sidewalks, bus stops, drainage basins, and other spaces that are in the public domain. "I am interested in the nobility of usefulness," Armajani has written. "My intention is to build open, available, useful, common, public gathering places. Gathering places that are neighborly. They are not conceived in terms of wood and steel but in terms of their nature as places at hand, ready to be used."

For Armajani and his colleagues, art is, or should be, a public matter, much as it was in Quattrocento Florence, and the artist should have an integral connection to society. This approach more or less rules out the concept of heroic individualism that has attached itself to artists throughout the modern period. It also pretty much rules out a career in the highly publicized art world of galleries, museums, and private collections. The fact that so many women have come to prominence in public art is no coincidence. Some of them turned to the public arena in the nineteen-seventies because they felt that the gallery scene was weighted so heavily against them; others say that, as women, they feel more naturally inclined than men do to put ego aside and to collaborate with others. Armajani is represented in New York by the Max Protetch Gallery; his work is in many museums and corporate collections; and he had a retrospective, in 1985, at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia, but in spite of this he is practically unknown within the New York art world. As a public artist who is also an intensely private man, he prefers it this way. He lives more or less anonymously in St. Paul, and he works in a nondescript commercial loft in Minneapolis. Until the opening of the Whitney Bridge, he was not nearly as well known in the Twin Cities as his wife, Barbara, a successful businesswoman; in 1983, she left her position as president of Powers, a large department store, to start a chain of specialty clothing shops, which she recently sold to Sears. The publicity that attended the bridge opening blew Armajani's cover; strangers speak to him on the street now, and this embarrasses him a good deal. "In public art, there is no room for a focus on the ego," he has said. "You have to get lost in the context of the work."

More than any of the other new public artists, Armajani sees his role in political and social terms, and in a context that is specifically American. He has great admiration for the Russian Constructivist artists, whose efforts to create a socially relevant art in the wake of the Russian Revolution were crushed by the emerging Stalinist regime, but he has always insisted that public art in America has to reflect America's particular mixture of democratic ideals. The notion of monumentality does not interest him at all. He has never gone in for large and assertive sculptural "statements"—the kind of sculpture that has appeared in front of so many governmental and corporate office buildings as a result of the per-cent-for-art public commissions of the last twenty years. He likes to describe his work as "low, common, and near to the people." Since 1968, Armajani has designed and built houses, offices, newsstands, picnic gardens, reading rooms (both indoor and outdoor), a lecture hall, a hospital waiting room, and, in Mitchell, South Dakota, a bandstand. He collaborated with Scott Burton and the architect Cesar Pelli on a large waterfront plaza in lower Manhattan, and, also with Pelli, he has designed two elevated walkways in Minneapolis and the top section of an as yet unbuilt office tower in San Francisco. (The last project, which is neither low nor common, hints at the loftier ambitions that coexist with his Midwestern populist ideals.)

From the start of his public-art career, Armajani has also built bridges. The bridge is a fine symbol of what he wants to achieve, as an artist and as a citizen. It links two separate points in space, but it is a sort of neighborhood, too—a locality with a particular character and ambience. As a work of art, moreover, a bridge invites the active participation of the onlooker; it is, in fact, incomplete until the onlooker becomes a participant. "All of Siah's permanent pieces deal with the question of the non-art audience," Burton said last year. "His work is explicitly democratic. I think an untrained audience can understand what it's about, because he adapts the genre of the garden, or the log cabin, or the covered bridge. Siah has really brought about a significant mutation in what art is, and he's been hugely influential on a lot of other artists and a lot of architects as well. It's profoundly American, what he's done, and, of course, he probably couldn't have done it if he'd been born here."

ONE summer evening in 1960, when Siah Armajani was in his last year at the Presbyterian missionary school in Teheran, he came home and was told that he would be going to college in America that fall. This was



"Care for a sleazeball?"

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quite a surprise. He had spent the afternoon writing "Yankee Go Home" and "Death to Franco" on the walls of buildings, using an onion-and-wax medium that would be invisible until the sun hit it the next morning. He and his politically engaged friends were not especially anti-American, and Armajani concedes that he was not exactly sure at that time who Franco was; they were passionately opposed to the Shah, however, and his corrupt and repressive regime, whose power depended so largely on United States support. At any rate, it did not occur to him to question or oppose a decision handed down by his father.

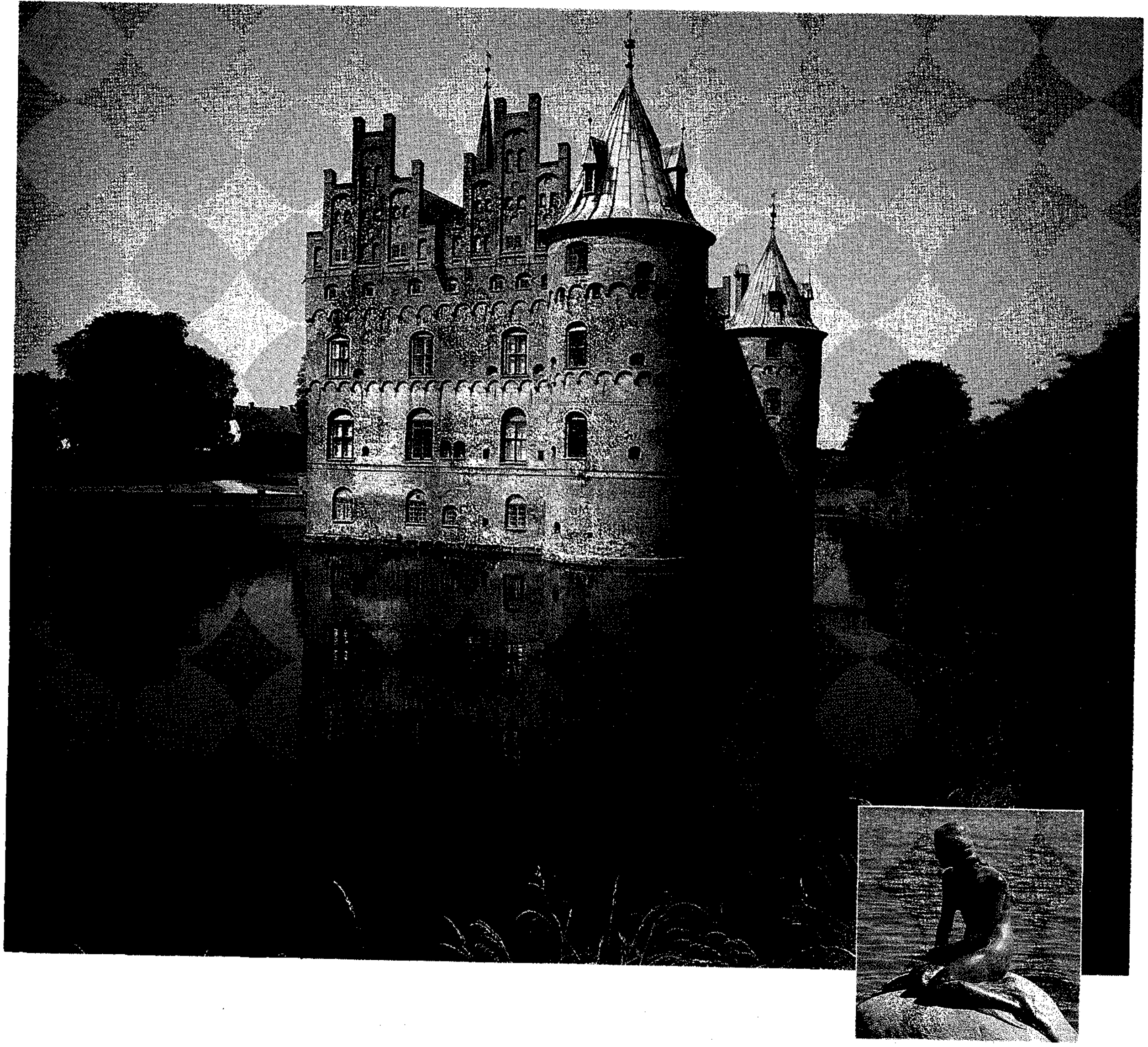
The Armajanis belonged to the small but thriving Christian minority in Iran. Siah's father, Aga Khan Armajani, had been educated at a Presbyterian missionary school in northern Iran, where the family lived then; most of his teachers had been Americans, and he had come away with a lifelong admiration for the United States. In time, Aga Khan had moved to Teheran, married, and become a successful merchant, an importer of silks from Europe. He sent all four of his children to the Presbyterian missionary school in Teheran, and all four of them eventually went to live in the United States.

Siah's memories of his childhood are mostly happy ones. He was the third in line of birth (there was an older sister, an older brother, and a younger brother), and he grew up in a large house full of books and traditional comforts, with some Western additions. His mother yearned to replace the ancestral furniture in the main sitting room with the kind of modern furniture that she saw in American magazines, and at length she engaged a carpenter to come and make some for her. He worked for several months in the basement of their house, copying from magazine photographs a fourteen-foot sofa with attached end tables. When he had finished, the piece was too large to get up the stairs. Mrs. Armajani was furious. "She told the carpenter that he was stupid," Armajani recalls, "and the man said, with great dignity, that he was not going to talk with her anymore about it, that he would wait until her husband came home. When our father returned, the carpenter explained to him that it was all a matter of luck. It had nothing to do with measurement, it was just his own bad luck—'If I had been lucky, I would not be a poor carpenter working in your basement.' Our father understood perfectly. He paid the man, and then he paid another carpenter to come and cut the sofa in half so he could move it upstairs and put it together again. My younger brother and I just could not stop laughing over this."

For all his pro-American bias, Siah's father did not approve of the forced Westernization of Iran under the Shah. "Like most of his class, he became increasingly disheartened by all that," Armajani told me. "The old, oral ways of doing business were being replaced by written contracts and legalism, and eventually he just stopped, withdrew from business. What people have never understood is that the Iranian revolution was supported by the merchants and shopkeepers as well as by the peasants." Christianity did not prevent the Armajanis from being deeply immersed in the Islamic culture of Iran, which differs from its Middle Eastern neighbors in being predominantly Shiite. Every Iranian child learns the story of the seventy-two Shiites who stood firm against an army of ten thousand Sunni Muslims: they could have escaped, but they chose to stand and be killed. "The story is told over and over, and the people weep every time," Armajani explains. "The seventy-two represent the ideal, which lives on. This is the genesis of Shiite Islam. In Iran, defeat is always seen as the first step toward eventual victory. Shiism is not a happy religion. But on the periphery of Shiism there was always Sufism, tempering its severities. All educated people in Iran consider themselves Sufis. All Persian art, all Persian poetry come out of Sufism, which is not a sect but an alternative strategy. It is a civilizing and humanizing influence that works very quietly and without calling attention to itself. There is very little of the pronoun 'I' in Iran; it is considered bad form. People say 'we,' or they tell stories, to take away the personal edge."

When Siah was still a young child, he decided he was going to be an artist. He has no idea why—there were no artists in the family. His father, a man of deep culture, who used to read Persian poems to the children every eve-

WE INVENTED ONCE UPON A TIME.



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ning, arranged for him to study with a master painter and calligrapher. "He was terrifying," Armajani recalls. "The first day, he produced a couple of semi-rotten apples in a dish, gave me ink and brushes, and told me to paint them. He told me that I had no talent whatsoever and that he was taking me only as a favor to my father, and he used to strike me on the hands with a long ruler when I made a mistake. I studied with him only for six months—I couldn't stand it any longer—but in the end I really could draw."

During his last two years at the missionary school, Siah became interested in Western philosophy. Although ninety per cent of the students were not Christians, the school had a special course on the major Western philosophers, from Socrates to the German school of Hegel, Nietzsche, and Heidegger. "There was very little discussion," Armajani remembers. "Mostly we just memorized texts." His attention was captured nevertheless. German philosophy and Islamic culture (humanized by Sufism) combined to develop in his young mind a persistent streak of idealism and a sense of obligation to others. In Iran, of course, loyalty to the family was the primary social duty. "I come from a very rigid, hierarchical culture," Armajani told me. "Every father there is a king, with the immediate family as his kingdom, and some fathers behave with great brutality." Aga Khan Armajani was never brutal, but since he was the eldest son of *his* father his authority extended beyond the household. His younger brother Yahya, Siah's uncle, would certainly have preferred to get his higher education in France, as most well-to-do Iranians did in those days, but he went to an American college instead, at Aga Khan's urging. Yahya graduated from Princeton with a degree in history, and he returned there a year later to get a master's degree in theology. On a subsequent lecture tour in the United States, he was invited to speak at Macalester College, in St. Paul, Minnesota, and his talk there so impressed the staff and the administration that he was asked to stay on as a member of the faculty. Yahya accepted. He taught history at Macalester for the next thirty years, and his presence there explains why Siah was sent to a medium-sized liberal-arts college in the American Middle West.

THERE is some uncertainty about Armajani's age when he arrived in this country. He usually cites 1939 as the year he was born, but birthdays are not celebrated in Iran, he says, and, chronology notwithstanding, he thinks he was nineteen when he got here, in the fall of 1960. A uniformed guard saw him racing with his bags through the terminal at Kennedy Airport, trying to make his connecting flight to Minneapolis-St. Paul. "Slow down, sonny," the man said, in a friendly voice. Armajani was so impressed that he did so. "I slowed down," he said. "I missed my flight. That sort of casual friendliness was the first thing that struck me here. Of course, I felt lost for a while, because of the language, and also because of the differences in behavior. In Persia, you never reveal yourself to a stranger, but here when you travel you reveal everything to the person in the next seat. It is impossible to be an exile in this country. I acquired friends, got involved in college life. I missed all that political activity I

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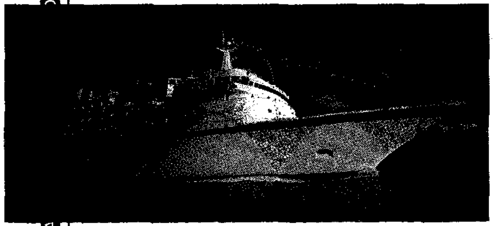


had been part of in Iran, but eventually I joined an Iranian students' organization called Friends of the Middle East. Later, we found out that the C.I.A. was paying the costs of our newspaper." At Macalester, he majored in philosophy, with a specific goal in mind. He wanted to find a framework for his social and political ideas. Macalester was then and still is a fount of Midwestern populist thinking, which appealed immediately and deeply to Armajani. Hubert Humphrey, who had taught at Macalester and was a friend of his Uncle Yahya's, became one of his heroes. It bothered him, though, that populism was so often misinterpreted as a movement geared to the lowest common denominator; to his mind, it was committed to making the highest achievements available to everyone—available, but not accessible. The distinction was important: what you achieved was up to you.

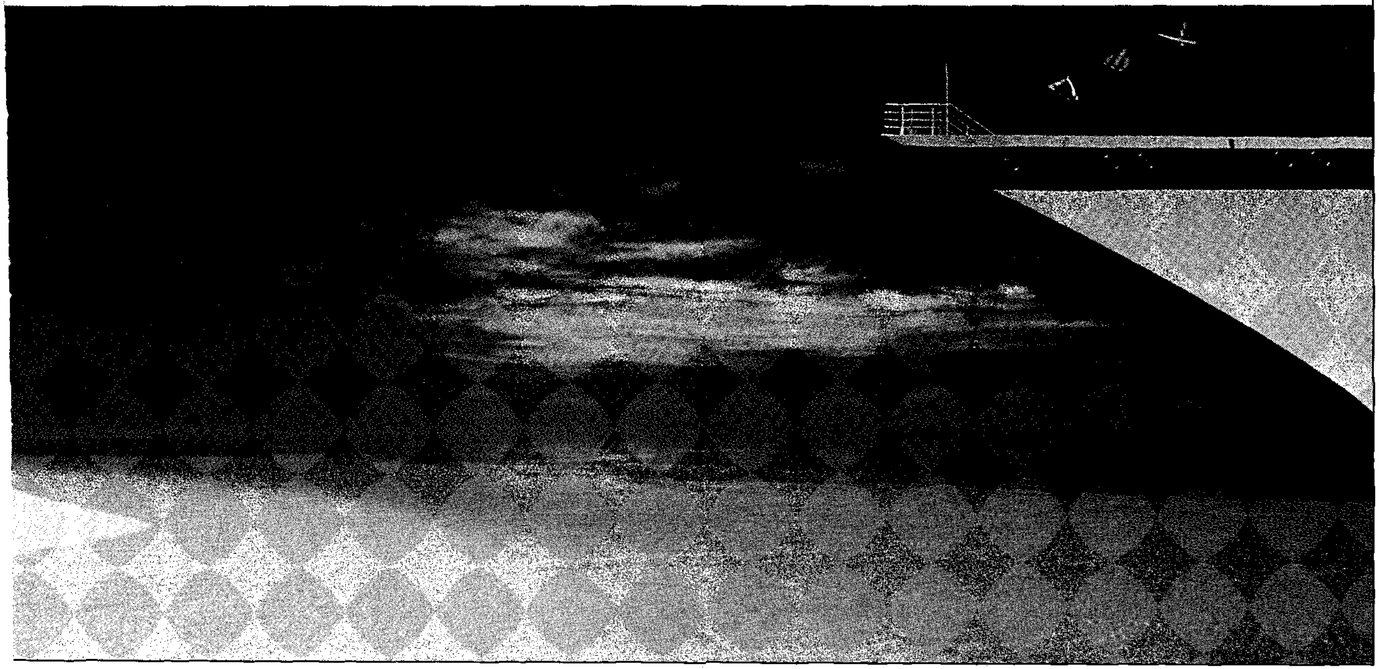
Even more important than populism, though, was his discovery, or, rather, rediscovery, of Ralph Waldo Emerson. In an effort to break away from European literary conventions, Emerson, working from German translations, had at one time translated Persian poetry into English. Armajani had read the English translations as a child. Now, at Macalester, he found in Emerson's essays many of the ideas that had influenced Hegel and Nietzsche. "Emerson underlined the excitement, the unpredictable madness of America in terms of daily life," he told me. "Unpredictable because the past is forgotten intentionally. Emerson wanted to break away from Europe intellectually, and to develop a truly American context. This led to pragmatism rather than metaphysics, to anthropology rather than philosophy—to John Dewey's insistence that all ideas be tested according to their applicability to life."

One day in 1961, at the start of the fall term, Armajani wandered into a classroom where some students were sitting in groups and talking. His unobtrusive entrance was noticed by a student named Barbara Bauer, a young woman of Scandinavian and German descent, who had grown up in a small town near St. Paul. As she explains it, she had a sudden feeling that she must find a way to silence the fellow-student who was chattering away on her right, so that she could concentrate on this decidedly un-Midwestern-looking stranger, because he was the person she was going to marry. She found out his name somehow, then went to the registrar's office and looked up his course schedule. After that, she managed it so that their paths crossed at least once a day. Eventually, he said hello, they started to talk, and that was that. "Siah never had a chance," Barbara jokes. They went together from then on, and they were married in 1967.

All through school in Iran and college in America, Armajani never deviated from his decision to be an artist. He was a relentless self-critic, though, and the only student works of his that survive are a few large black-and-white calligraphic paintings that he did at Macalester. They were made by inscribing lines of Persian poetry (in Persian) on every inch of the canvas, lines going in all directions and sometimes on top of other lines, impossible to read except in fragments. It was an attempt, perhaps, to hold on to his Middle Eastern roots in the heart of the American Middle West. Armajani

KONOS KUALA LUMPUR NEW YORK OSLO PIRAEUS LONDON PAPEETE BORDEAUX SYRACUSE WHITTIER HAMBURG BANGKOK QUEBEC

IE BEACH, TAKE A BLANKET, A BUTLER, 33 CHEFS AND 17,000 BOTTLES OF WINE.



ST. THOMAS VICTORIA WELLINGTON GIBRALTAR ST. MAARTEN CONSTANTA MACAPA

NAZAIRE CALDERA SOUTHAMPTON MAUI PICTON FORT-DE-FRANCE SANTAREM CAPRI SAN BLAS ISLANDS BOMBAY SINGAPORE ROME

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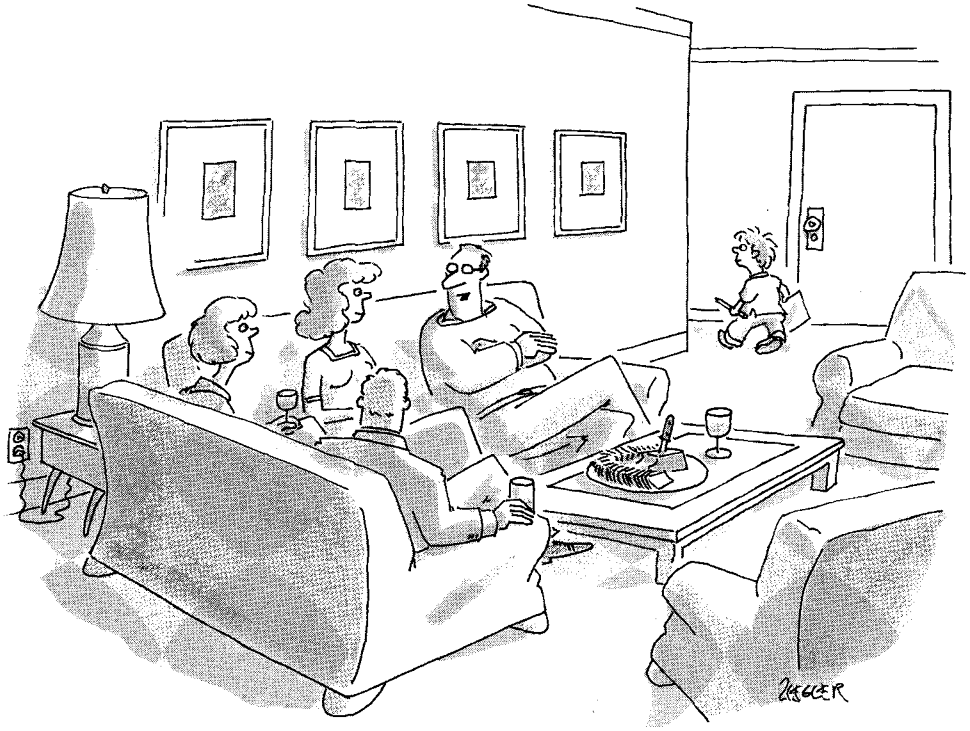

"I address all of Daniel's spelling and long-division needs."

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had a hard time with European art history. He flunked the basic art-history course at Macalester six times, because he couldn't pass the tests in which slides of paintings were shown on a screen and students had to identify the artists. "At the end of each semester, I would ask if I could write a paper on Persian miniatures as a makeup exam," he said, "and the answer was always no. Finally, after six tries, I asked if I could write a paper on the Russian Constructivists and they said yes, and I passed. I was interested in the Constructivists because they were political, because there was no separation between the citizen and the artist—what we're trying to do now in public art. They are really our paradigm, Tatlin and Rodchenko and Malevich and the rest."

When Armajani graduated from college, in the spring of 1963, he found a cheap loft in downtown Minneapolis and started right in being an artist. "Siah always knew where he was going," Barbara Armajani told me. "He had no doubts at all, even in the beginning, and he never needed encouragement or recognition."

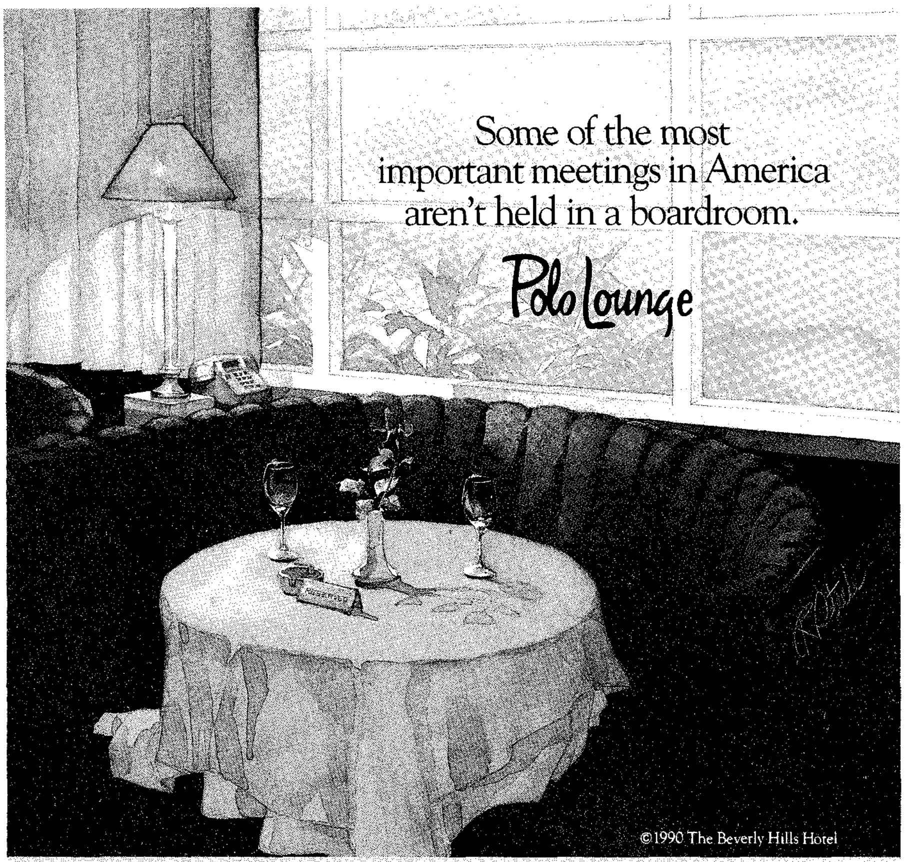
Since Armajani knew no other artists at the time, he was not aware that in order to be one you were supposed to go to New York. "By the time I found that out, it was too late—I was already established here," he recalls. He worked entirely on his own for several years, testing out ideas, reading philosophy, and shaking off what he had learned in college. He continued to work on black-and-white calligraphy paintings. The Walker Art Center had shown one of them in its biennial exhibition in 1962, and subsequently bought it for the permanent collection.

Minneapolis has a reputation for being exceptionally hospitable to the arts. Years of sustained patronage have enabled the Minneapolis Institute of Arts to build an impressive historical collection, and in the nineteen-sixties the Walker Art Center, under the imaginative direction of Martin Friedman, was turning into one of the best modern-art museums in the country. The Walker, the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre, and the Minneapolis Symphony are all generously funded, and several local foundations give grants to resident and non-resident artists. There is also the Minneapolis College of Art and Design, a hundred-and-three-year-old school that attracts art students from all over the country. Armajani was hired to teach there in 1968, along with another young artist, Barry Le Va. Arnold Herstand, the school's president at the time (he later became an art dealer in New York), hired Armajani and Le Va because he thought, on the basis of seeing their work and talking to them, that they would challenge and invigorate the students, and they more than fulfilled his hopes.

Le Va, who had recently graduated from the Otis Art Institute, in Los Angeles, took the job because Minneapolis was on the way to New York, where he wanted to be. He knew a lot more about the contemporary art world than Armajani did, and he really introduced him to conceptual art, which Armajani had been dabbling in without knowing that there was such a thing. Having graduated from Macalester with a major in philosophy and a minor in mathematics, Armajani had been spending some of his time in the computer lab at the University of Minnesota, experimenting with number progressions. Le Va filled him in on the work of Joseph Kosuth, Lawrence Weiner, and other New York artists for whom ideas, concepts, and simulations had become not only the most important but virtually the sole aspect of their art work. Armajani and Le Va became close friends almost immediately, and, as first-year teachers teaching first-year art students, they called on one another for support both inside and outside the classroom. "I'd get him to lecture to my students, and I'd lecture to his students," Le Va recalls. "We both emphasized ideas over products, and tried to give the students other options." The options that Armajani presented to his students were mainly philosophical and political. He was in the process of developing his ideas about public art as a means of involving himself in American society, and his lectures helped him to sharpen his thinking. The students were responsive. Armajani took anti-authority positions on most of the political issues of the late sixties, and he told Sufi stories. Everybody laughed a lot in his classes. In one of the college yearbooks, there is a picture of Armajani on skates, being held up at the elbows by two giant Minnesota lads in hockey pads; they had talked him into being coach of the hockey team, mainly because he knew absolutely nothing about the game.

MINIMAL and conceptual art, the dominant aesthetic strategies of the late nineteen-sixties, appealed to Armajani's philosophical bent. He read the critical tracts that sometimes threatened to sink both movements in an avalanche of words, and he contributed a few works of his own to the conceptualist inventory. In 1968, he computed the height and diameter of a tower that would cast a three-hundred-and-sixty-mile shadow across the entire state of North Dakota, from one border to the other. (It would be eighteen miles high, and its tip would be two miles in diameter.) One of his mathematical projections was included in the "Information" show at the Museum of Modern Art in 1970, the first big museum exhibition of conceptual art. There was a note of absurdist humor in the North Dakota tower and other Armajani concepts—a note seldom detectable in the solemn cogitations of most of the other conceptualists. It was as though he could not take quite seriously an art whose content was the artist's thinking process. It had always been clear to him that his own art would require a social content, and by the late sixties he had come to feel that it must deal specifically with American life and American society. "Around that time, a new group of Iranian students had appeared over here, talking about Islam," he told me. "That was really something to behold. My generation had been trying to find salvation through a synthesis of Eastern and Western civilization, but the new generation rejected all that, and they were very self-assured about it. That's when I decided to become an American citizen." To get a firmer conceptual grip on what America was and how it had developed, he had also begun to teach himself about early American building methods and structures, from log cabins and wooden bridges to Jefferson's designs for Monticello. "I decided to cast my lot with architecture, which by its very nature is social," he said. This did not mean that he had decided to become an architect, or even that he wanted his work to be primarily functional. His idea was to use architecture—pragmatic, vernacular, American architecture—as a frame of reference for an art that would be relevant to his adopted society.

That art was obviously going to be sculpture. One of the earliest examples of it was "First Bridge," which he built in 1968, on an open field he had bought for the purpose in the town of White Bear Lake, some twenty miles north of St. Paul. "First Bridge" was a hundred-and-twenty-five-foot-long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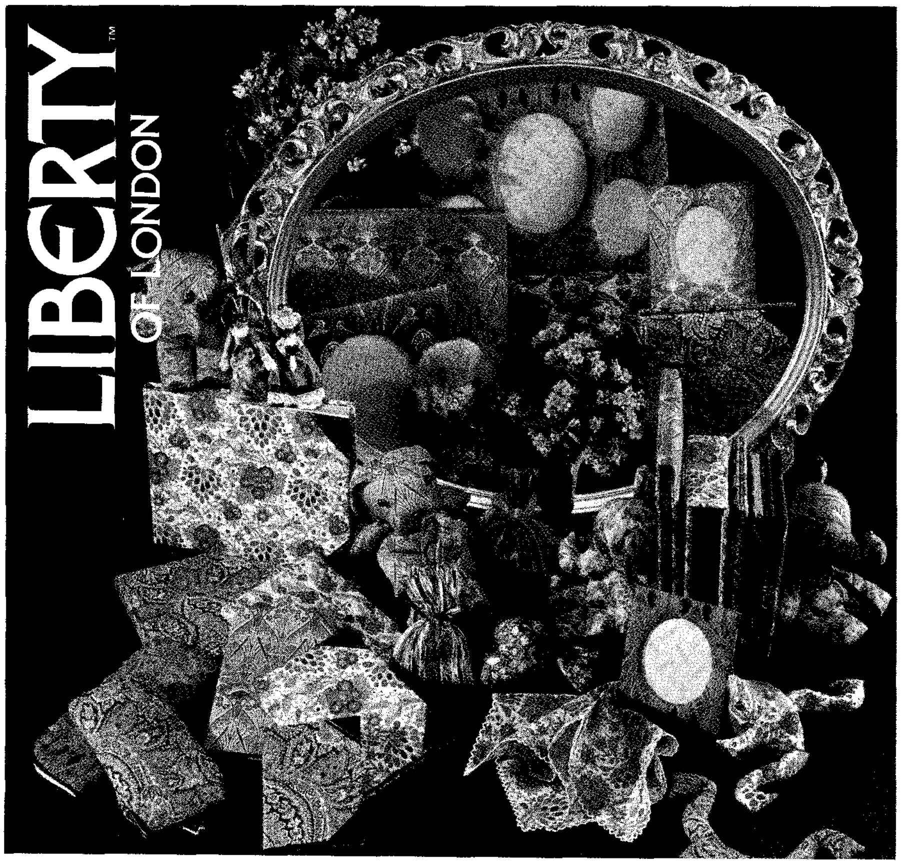

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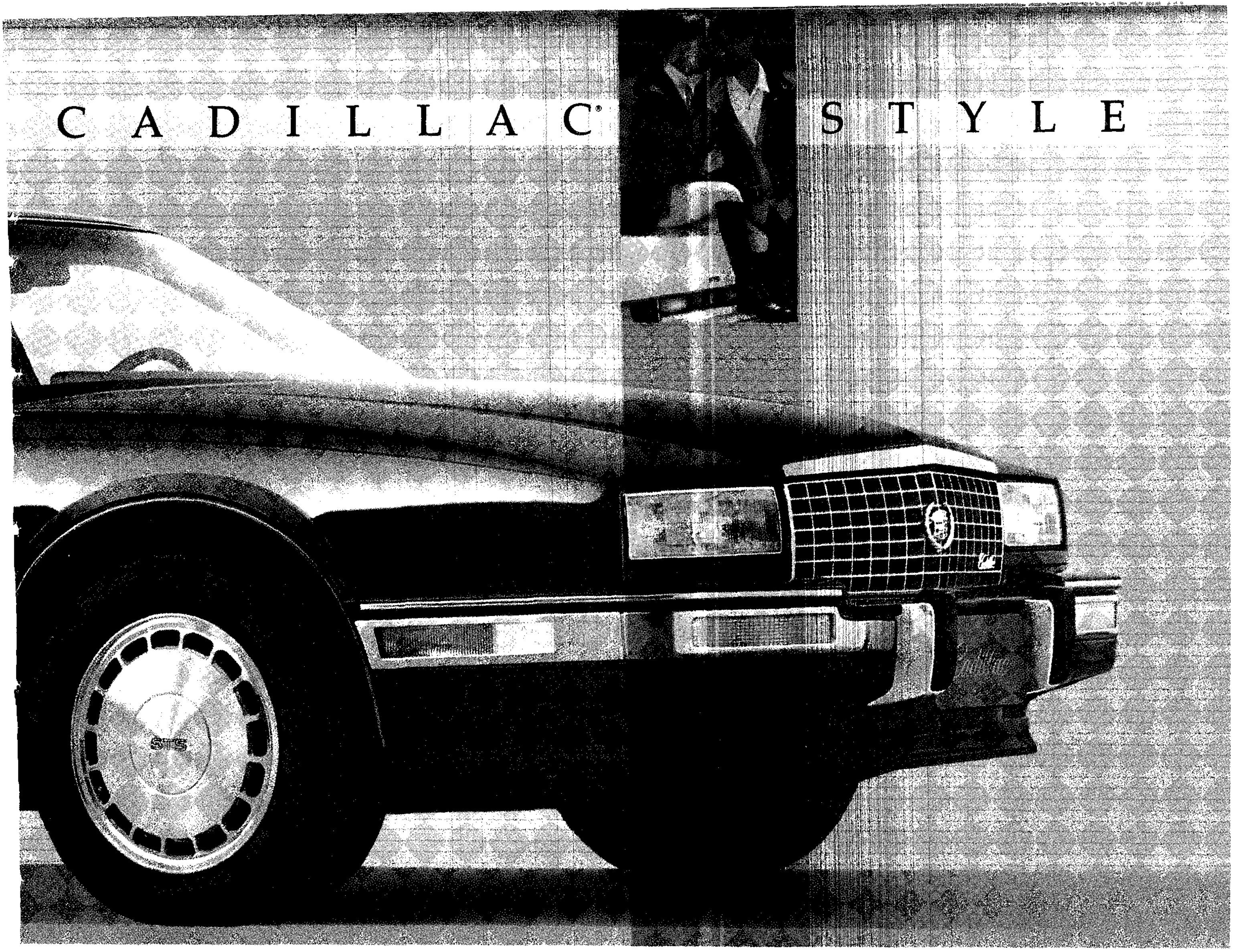

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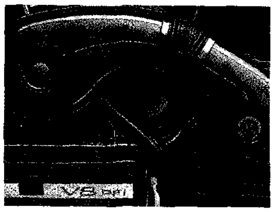
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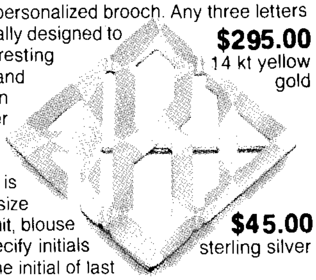

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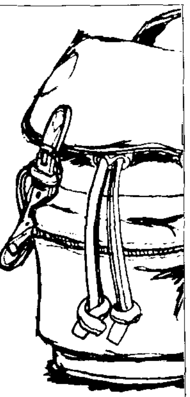


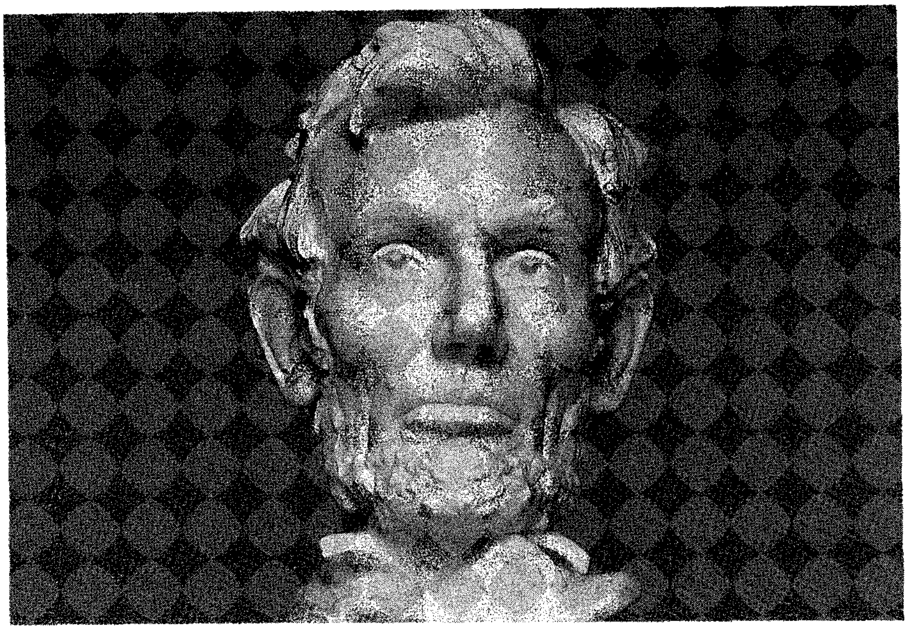
covered wooden bridge whose height diminished progressively from ten feet at one end to four feet at the other. Its function was conceptual: to make an apparent visual experience a real one. When we start across a covered bridge, the far end of it always looks smaller than the end we enter. The far end of "First Bridge" actually was smaller, but that did not become evident until the viewer was halfway across. "I was just trying to investigate bridge structure physically, perceptually, and conceptually," Armajani explained to me. He had never seen a covered bridge at that time, only photographs of covered bridges. This one looked very much like the real thing (except for the foreshortening); it was made of weathered boards nailed together in practical-carpentry style.

Two years later, an Armajani bridge was part of an exhibition at the Walker Art Center. This singularly ill-fated show, called "9 Artists/9 Spaces," was the brainchild of a young curator named Richard Koshalek, who is now the director of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. "The idea was to get artists to do things in vacant lots, dark alleys, and dead places around town, and bring them to life," Koshalek recalls. "What you have to remember, though, is that in those days, the late sixties and early seventies, there was practically no audience for contemporary art in Minneapolis. People in the major corporations would tell you they wanted nothing to do with it. It was also a very volatile period, with a lot of anti-establishment demonstrations going on." The first of the nine art works to be unveiled was Ron Brodigan's "Untitled," a quarter-mile length of galvanized-steel tubing that snaked and burrowed its way through sizable chunks of a Minneapolis park that happened to be the gathering place for a tribe of local hippies. Within a few hours, the hippies had stamped it flat, and then they demolished it. Misfortune next descended upon a neon-and-asphalt assemblage by Fred Escher, in a black neighborhood in St. Paul; this one ran afoul of the local Model Cities program office, which denounced it as "irrelevant to the black community" and brought about its removal. William Wegman's thirty-five-foot-long billboard painting of the Foshay Tower (a Minneapolis landmark), looking highly realistic but lying on its side, disappeared overnight from its site on the University of Minnesota campus; some days later, it was learned that agents of the F.B.I., who apparently saw in the work an incitement to bombing, had removed and confiscated it. (A bomb had gone off in the mathematics lab at the University of Wisconsin that summer, killing a research student.) Inside the Walker, museum staffers doctored a poster to read "7 ARTISTS/7 SPACES" and then "6 ARTISTS/6 SPACES." Next, Richard Treiber's "Elevated Brush Pile," a wooden platform with a huge pile of brush on top, which had been installed on the Court of Honor in front of the state capitol, in St. Paul, was denounced by one of the legislators as an insult to the war dead; the Fire Department declared it a fire hazard and carted it away.

Siah Armajani's contribution to the show miraculously failed to offend anyone, although its installation was fraught with difficulties. Installed on a field near the Walker Art Center (a site that is now part of the sculpture garden), it was a "Covered Foot Bridge," eighty-five feet long, that rose up sharply at its midpoint to go over a six-foot pine tree. The tree had been planted first, while the bridge was under construction elsewhere. The night before the bridge was moved to the site, Koshalek noticed that the pine tree had turned brown. He went out after dark and sprayed it with green paint. Then, the next day, while Armajani, Koshalek, and several other people stood by waiting for a work crew to unload the bridge from a flatbed truck, the whole thing suddenly slid off and fell to the ground. "Everybody looked with horror at Siah, who seemed completely unfazed," Koshalek recalls. "He said, 'It was supposed to do that.' " Luckily, the damage was slight, and "Bridge Over a Tree," as it has been referred to ever since, amused and perplexed viewers for the duration of the show, after which it was dismantled and taken away.

Armajani was also building houses then—models of houses, half scale or smaller, in which he continued his conceptual investigation of structure and meaning. He built them out of cheap lumber, using the practical, rough-and-ready methods of early American carpenters, but they did not look very practical. Walls, ceilings, windows, floors, and other elements, although recognizable as such, did not relate to each other in the ways that one would expect, and the interior spaces were highly eccentric. What he was really doing was deconstructing the idea of a house. "I was trying to take apart and decipher each separate element, and then put the elements back together according to a larger context," he said. "There are always two historical patterns at work—the past that once was present, and the past that still conditions the present. Folk art versus the vernacular. By deconstructing, we suppress the priority of the past." According to Armajani, the American understanding of history is pragmatic and is oriented toward the present. In trying to get at what was truly and actively American in American vernacular architecture, though, he seemed to be moving in a strange direction. For all its homely materials and straightforward carpentry, the work was becoming increasingly hermetic, private, and indecipherable. There was nothing open, available, or useful about his wooden house models. When I asked him about this, his reply, as usual, was succinct. "It is always through the idea of the usefulness of an object that I become acquainted with it," he said. "This usefulness can be functional, or perceptual, or spiritual. It can provoke ideas without being functional."

Ideas were what mattered. Armajani's mind was so taken up with ideas that he had trouble driving a car. He had a number of accidents, none of them very serious because he never drove fast. He sideswiped other cars, and went through red lights. Once, while he was driving back from the airport, his attention was caught by a billboard put up by a religious group: "It showed Christ, Pontius Pilate, and a crowd of people behind them, and underneath it said in big letters 'What Would You Do?' My God, what a question!" The next moment, Armajani felt a substantial impact, and, looking out to the side, he found that his car had gone right up the back of the car in front of him, which had stopped for a light. "I was actually on top of that



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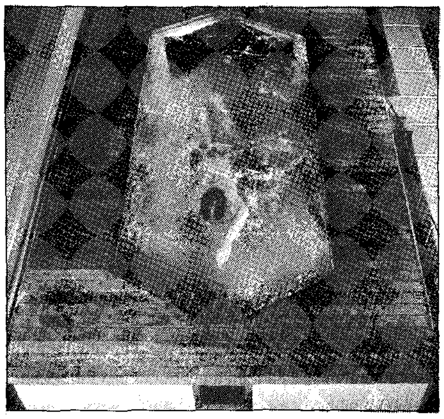

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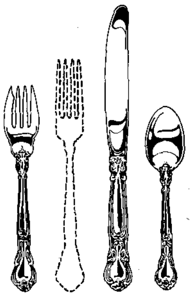

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car,” he said. The woman driving the other car got out, unhurt. The police assumed that Armajani was drunk, but they were proved wrong. He got off with a stiff fine.

“Because I was in so many accidents, I had an attorney, Mr. Byrne,” Armajani told me. “One day when we were having lunch together, somebody telephoned him from Jackson, Minnesota, to say that they wanted to bring their town into the twentieth century, and did he have any ideas? Mr. Byrne said, ‘I have just the right person sitting next to me.’ We flew over there a day or so later in a small plane.” Jackson, a rural town of about thirty-five hundred people, wanted help in saving its eight-block central business district, which was losing all its business to highway shopping centers. Armajani became deeply involved in the problem, and he ended up working with the townspeople, off and on, for the next four years. He conferred with the local citizens’ committee and with the store owners, he put high-school students and teachers to work doing research on how the street used to look, and he drew up plans for restoring the buildings to their nineteenth-century purity. (The way to enter the twentieth century, apparently, was to bring back the nineteenth.) Each store owner assumed the cost of his building’s restorations, and because the work was considered maintenance, not capital improvement, there was no increase in property taxes. It was a wonderful experience for Armajani: “I learned that in order to do something like that you had to get right in and deal with the tax structure, with the businesspeople, and with the politicians.”

“Of course, if you feel you must pick up the tab . . .”

ARMAJANI was getting more and more invitations to lecture at colleges and universities outside Minneapolis. He could be a mesmerizing talker when he warmed to his subject, and his subject, much of the time, was the need for a new approach to public art. Surprisingly little thought had been given to this question, or to the contradiction that lay at the heart of it. In the past, public art works commemorated real people or real events, or else they provided a symbolic reminder of shared, communal values. Most modern art, however, was self-contained; it had jettisoned the age-old task of representation in order to become a thing-in-itself, and, if it referred to the world outside, it often did so in ways that were not easily apparent to the layman. To be sure, a good deal of quasi-public art had been produced in the years since the Second World War; the most familiar examples of it were large-scale sculptures by Alexander Calder and Henry Moore, commissioned by corporate clients and set down in front of the high-rise steel-and-glass office towers that were making the business districts of so many American cities look so much alike. A big, semi-abstract Henry Moore worked against uniformity. It helped to soften the hard edges of the International Style, and it also served to suggest that the corporation was mindful of culture and of human values—or so the client hoped. But could such works really be called public? The public, for the most part, seemed to accept them with an equanimity that was barely distinguishable from indifference. The public seemed to accept anything that the corporation chose to enhance its image with, even totally abstract and anti-formal sculptures by artists who were far less gifted than Calder or Moore—all those bent tubes in plazas—but there was always the suspicion that such works meant little or nothing to the people who passed by them every day on their way to and from work.

A great many more artists began doing public art in the late sixties and the early seventies, when the federal government, after years of providing no direct support for the arts, discovered that there was a significant arts constituency in this country. The National Endowment for the Arts, established in 1965, began in 1967 to make grants to public-art projects initiated at the state and local level. The General Services Administration, the huge bureaucracy whose functions include contracting for all new government buildings throughout the country, activated in 1973 a dormant per-cent-for-art program, which commissioned art works for hundreds of new federal buildings. A number of state governments followed suit, and artists of all kinds—sculptors, painters, printmakers, ceramicists, weavers—began getting commissions for work in public places. All this involved public money, of course, and there were a few cases where the public, whose tax dollars were paying for it, took issue with the results. The citizens of Grand Rapids, Michigan, rose up in anger when their elected authorities applied for N.E.A. funds and commissioned a large Calder stabile for the main square. That was the first N.E.A. grant for public art, in 1967, and much has been made of the fact that popular sentiment in

Grand Rapids eventually turned in favor of the Calder work, "La Grande Vitesse," to such a degree that its image is now used on the mayor's stationery, on the sides of the city's garbage trucks, and on every downtown street sign. The sculpture apparently came to stand for something, then, but what? Civic pride? The conquest of Babbittry? The importance of a logo in a world where image is everything?

Large sculptures like "La Grande Vitesse" raise the question of monumentality, which was an important aspect of earlier public art. The public monument, larger than life-size and raised above eye level, used to convey a heroic or an otherworldly message. Today, such messages are out of fashion; they embarrass us. Some of the Abstract Expressionists in the nineteen-forties and fifties tried to hit the note of heroism in their paintings, and it was this aspect of their work that the next generation, the Pop-art generation, reacted against with such derisive élan. Claes Oldenburg's drawings of proposed colossal monuments, such as the vast toilet float for the Thames in London or the giant Teddy bear for Central Park, were viewed as great jokes; to the surprise of many people, though, several of his proposals were subsequently commissioned, and built to monumental scale—a hundred-foot-high steel baseball bat in Chicago, for example, and a forty-five-foot-high clothespin in Philadelphia. Oldenburg's anti-monuments are in tune with late-twentieth-century America, but this may be another way of saying that monumentality itself is no longer valid. The most successful monument in recent years is Maya Ying Lin's Vietnam Veterans Memorial, in Washington, D.C.—a polished, V-shaped black granite slab bearing the name of every American serviceman killed in Vietnam. It is set into the earth on the Mall and is virtually invisible until you walk right up to it—the antithesis of the vertical man-on-horseback or the triumphal arch. "I think in a real democracy you should not look up at anything," Armajani has said. "Everything should be at eye level. And in this particular democracy you don't need heroes."

At some point during the nineteen-seventies, the term "site-specific" came into vogue as a justification for art works in public places. The term had

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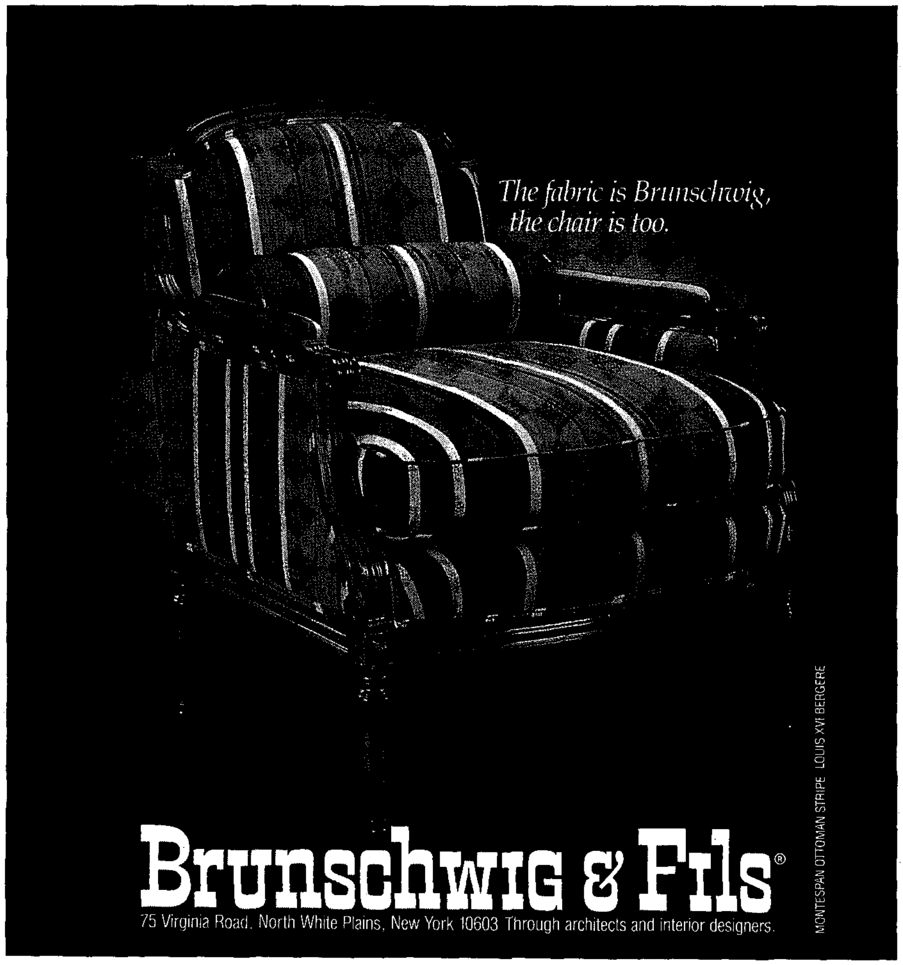

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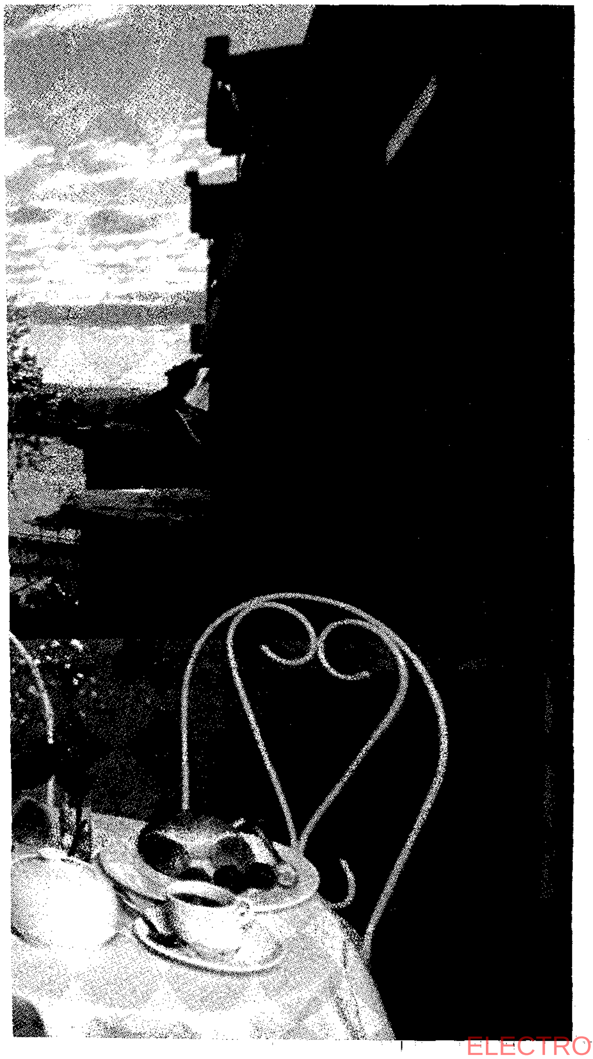
been used originally by the earth artists, whose work was by no means public; financed by their dealers or by private sponsors, they used bulldozers and other heavy-duty equipment to alter the landscape in areas remote from human habitation. (The best-known earthwork was Robert Smithson's earth-and-rock "Spiral Jetty," in Utah's Great Salt Lake.) Other artists liked the term, however, and soon nearly every new sculpture or wall hanging in a public place was being referred to as site-specific. This meant, presumably, that the artist had studied every aspect of the site and then had made a work that related to it directly, either in harmony or in opposition. All too often, though, what those works seemed to relate to most specifically was the artist's previous work. Another term, "plop art," was coined to describe a studio sculpture that had simply been blown up in scale and plopped down in a public setting. Some of the architecturally related sculpture of the last fifteen years has been brilliantly successful in its own terms—works such as Jean Dubuffet's "Group of Four Trees," in Chase Manhattan Plaza, in Manhattan, and Isamu Noguchi's sculpture garden for the Beinecke Library, at Yale. (Noguchi was making proposals as early as the nineteen-thirties for projects that anticipated both earth art and the most recent public art; not many of his designs were realized, but the ones that were—for example, the UNESCO Garden in Paris and "Two Bridges" in Hiroshima—establish him as the most significant public artist of his time.) There is no doubt, though, that a great deal of mediocre public art has come into existence here since 1970. This in itself is not so surprising. Many of the equestrian statues and portrait busts that were put up in parks and town squares in the last century were mediocre, too, though at least the public could (and maybe still can) feel some sort of personal relationship to them. What is surprising is that so few artists and so few government or corporate sponsors felt the need to rethink or redefine the nature of public art in contemporary terms, or to ask themselves how contemporary painting and sculpture, which are essentially private in their appeal, and refer principally to other art, could operate effectively in a non-art setting.

ARMAJANI's bridge and house models appeared in a number of group exhibitions in the nineteen-seventies, including one at the Clocktower in New York. In 1974, he started to work on a series of architectural objects which he called his "Dictionary for Building." Each of these was a study of a particular element in domestic architecture—a door, a window, a piece of furniture—presented sometimes in isolation and sometimes in relation to another element. From 1974 to 1978, he made hundreds of these in small scale, out of cardboard, and after 1978 he made them in larger scale, of more durable materials. "What I was trying to do was put together an index of art and architectural possibilities," he told me. "All the physical properties of doors, windows, and so forth, such as a chair against a wall, or a chair by a window." At the same time, he was designing structures based on Jefferson's plan for Monticello. Armajani wanted to absorb Jefferson's political thinking

OVERLOOKING THE DUFFERIN TERRACE, QUÉBEC CITY architecturally, by immersing himself in what he considered Jefferson's attempt to define and develop an American architectural style in which a building was based on the equality of its parts. In Armajani's versions of Monticello, though, the architectural ideas are dissected and reassembled in such a way that walls meet ceilings at strange angles, and every proportion is askew. In 1978, when Armajani was invited to participate in the new-talent show at the Guggenheim Museum, in New York, he commandeered the museum's entire ground floor for an architectural piece called "Lissitsky's Neighborhood, Center House." A sprawling, chaotic-looking wooden structure on many levels, it paid homage to the Constructivist artist El Lissitsky while employing the methods and materials of early American builders. Linda Shearer, the Guggenheim curator who selected the artists for the show, said later that she had been surprised by Armajani's sculpture. "It struck me that this very unaggressive man had made a very aggressive piece," she said. "But in an odd way it was accessible to the ordinary viewer, who could go inside and climb around and wonder what made it art."

Up to this point, none of Armajani's work had been functional. Its main purpose had been to test or refine certain ideas—a legitimate function in his terms but hardly the open, available, useful sort of art that he eventually came to envisage. Toward the end of the seventies, though, he began to design a series of "reading rooms" and "reading gardens" that show him moving in the direction of art-for-use. Reading, of course, is the key to the democratic experiment, the essential first step on the road to responsible citizenship. The spaces that Armajani conceived for this purpose were neither comfortable nor particularly inviting, as they might have been if he had addressed reading primarily as a form of pleasure. The furniture consisted of tables and hard wooden benches, and the fragmented, odd-angled geometry of the surrounding elements did not offer much privacy. What he was doing, once again, was largely conceptual: the *idea* of reading made manifest through architecture. Most of the reading spaces were done as temporary installations, but one has become permanent. Having been commissioned to do a work for the "Art at the Olympics" program in 1979, Armajani went to Lake Placid, the Winter Olympics site, found a vacant lot on a quiet residential street, brought in some benches and tables and placed them where they would get the best light during the day, and proceeded to build a wood-frame house around them. This odd-shaped "Reading House" is still there ten years later, although nobody uses it for reading.

Written texts became an element in Armajani's work in 1980. Persian architecture often has quotations from the Koran worked into its decorative scheme, and Armajani, whose calligraphy paintings showed a reverence for the combination of word and image, had been thinking for some time about using written texts in his architectural pieces. He did so for the first time in a "Meeting Garden" that he constructed for the annual invitational show at Artpark, in Lewiston, New York. He was very uneasy about doing it; he had made a space for a quotation, but he hesitated to put it in until the last



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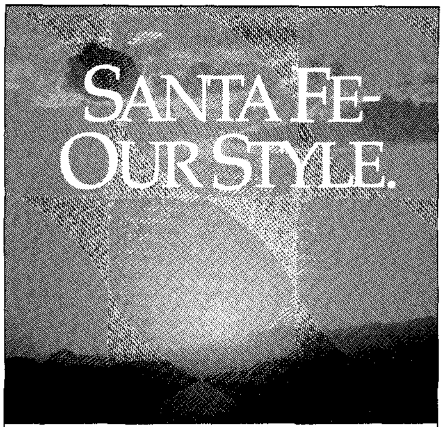

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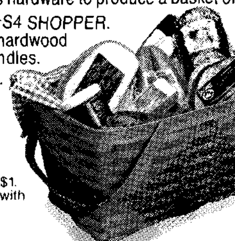

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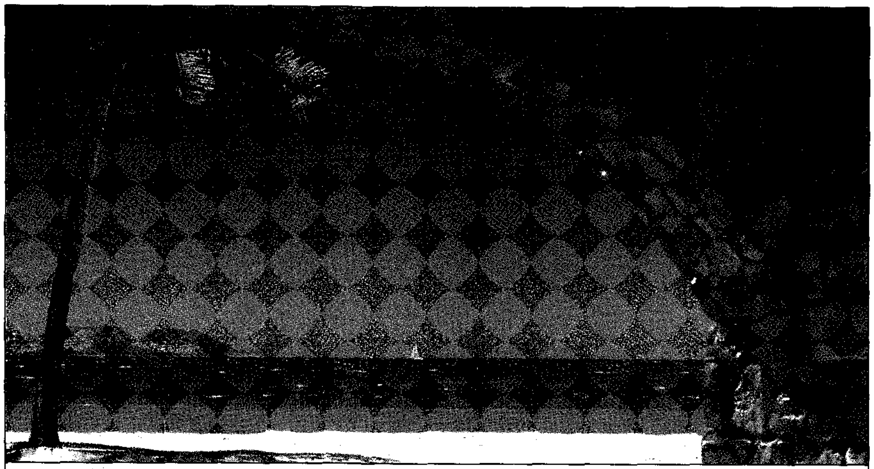
moment. "I'd been feeling that my pieces didn't provoke people enough," he explained to me. "It seemed that a written text could be the catalyst I was looking for, to make a connection and bring people together, but I was afraid that people might think the whole project was designed for the quotation. I wanted it to be one part of the experience but *not* the whole point." The quotation he chose was from John Dewey's "Art as Experience," and it appeared in stencilled capitals high on the wall of a shedlike structure at the far end of the garden: "AS LONG AS ART IS THE BEAUTY PARLOR OF CIVILIZATION, NEITHER ART NOR CIVILIZATION IS SECURE."

He must have felt that this text worked the way he wanted it to, because he has used quotations in his work ever since: Emerson in an "Office for Four," commissioned by the Hudson River Museum in 1981; Walt Whitman for an "Employee Lounge," at the Hirshhorn Museum, in Washington, D.C., in 1981; Robert Frost for a "Poetry Lounge," at the California Institute of Technology, in Pasadena, in 1982; Whitman again for a "Louis Kahn Lecture Room," in Philadelphia, in 1982. These spaces were more readily available for human use than the earlier reading rooms had been. Although their furniture was rudimentary and their amenities were Spartan—the "Office for Four" consisted of four wood-frame cubicles, each of which contained a bench, a table, and a coatrack, and had a naked forty-watt light bulb in the ceiling—they could be, and actually were, used for the purposes intended, more or less. (A writer and a seamstress worked in two of the four "offices" at the Hudson River Museum for the run of the show.) The "Louis Kahn Lecture Room," which had been commissioned as a permanent installation by the Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial, is used today as a meeting room, a small lecture hall, and a gallery for changing exhibitions of Louis Kahn's architectural drawings. The Kahn room is a wonderfully clear evocation of Armajani's democratic thinking. The speaker's platform is low and understated, and the seating—straight-backed wooden benches set diagonally against one wall—leaves most of the floor space free for the display of a quotation from "Leaves of Grass," which is inlaid in the form of a rectangle. Armajani had discovered in his research for the commission that Louis Kahn once studied art at the Fleisher; his decision to dedicate the room to Kahn so touched the architect's widow that she donated one of his drawings to the school, and she has continued to lend others to the changing exhibitions of Kahn's work.

THE questions about contemporary public art that were largely ignored in the nineteen-sixties and seventies came to the fore with considerable urgency in the eighties. Artists and patrons alike, it appeared, were troubled by the proliferation of self-referential abstract sculptures in plazas and in front of new buildings. Many artists came to feel that their work was being used to pretty up bad buildings, which was often the case. Quite a few architects objected to the commissioning of art works that they felt were inappropriate for the spaces they had designed. The public, meanwhile—the formerly docile and largely accepting public—was beginning to show its teeth. A great many office workers in lower Manhattan objected violently to Richard Serra's "Tilted Arc," a massive sculpture in the form of a leaning steel wall, twelve feet high and a hundred and twenty feet long, which bisected the pedestrian plaza in front of the Jacob K. Javits Federal Building, on Foley Square. The public dispute over "Tilted Arc" dragged on for eight years, and ended acrimoniously, last March, with the sculpture's removal by the General Services Administration, which had commissioned it. Serra fought tenaciously against its removal, claiming breach of contract and impairment of his rights to freedom of speech and expression. "Tilted Arc" was site-specific, he insisted; to remove it from the site was to destroy it. (Nobody seemed to notice that there was a strikingly similar curved steel wall by Serra, the "St. Johns Rotary Arc," installed across town at the Holland Tunnel exit, a site differing in almost every respect from Foley Square.) He and his partisans warned that the G.S.A. could never again expect an artist to sign a contract with the government, and he cited Nazi book burnings and other grim precedents. None of those arguments deterred the local G.S.A. administrator, William Diamond—who had said even before the public hearings on "Tilted Arc" that he favored "relocating" the piece—from recommending and accomplishing its eventual removal, and the wrath of the art world lies heavy on his head.

Behind all the rhetoric, though, some interesting questions were raised. Should a work of art that is intended for a public space be judged by the same criteria as a work of art that is intended for a private collector or a museum? Should the public—or, anyway, that part of the public which is in immediate, everyday contact with the work—have a voice in its selection, and, if so, how much of a voice? (People can choose whether or not to look at works of art in museums, but with public art no such choice is possible.) What is to be done if a work of public art, after a sufficient period in situ, is perceived to have been a mistake—perceived not only by the layman but by what the champions of "Tilted Arc" kept referring to as "qualified observers"? Museums make mistakes of this kind, and so do private collectors; the results are then sold or put in storage. Some of Serra's most fervent art-world supporters thought that "Tilted Arc" was a mistake, in the sense that it did not "work" successfully in the architectural context of Foley Square.

One of the effects of the "Tilted Arc" fiasco was to throw into sharper relief the new kind of public art that was evolving in the work of Armajani and certain other artists. Most of these artists admired Serra, and some of them were his friends, but the truth was that their approach to work in public spaces was virtually the antithesis of his. "It is not the business of art to deal with human needs," Serra has said. Serra perceives himself as an artist in the early-modern, "heroic" mold, an artist who wants to impose his monumental sculptural forms upon a society that probably will not understand them for years to come; the audience for his work, he often says, is a limited one. Serra's work was in many museums throughout the world, and his reputation as a major artist was secure. For Armajani and others, though, art in public places was not the same as the great modern art in museums. They were not interested in creating unique, individual works of art, no matter how site-specific; what they wanted was a chance to work with public spaces in their entirety—to articulate them in ways that were useful, exhilarating, and aesthetically pleasing. Scott Bur-



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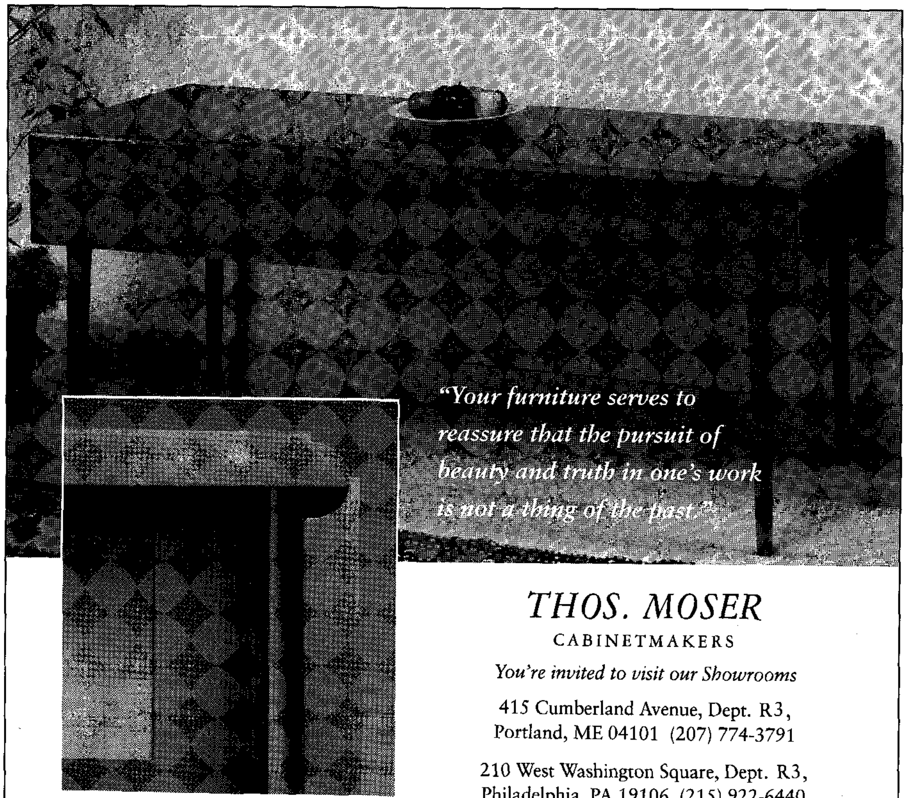
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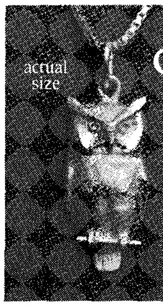
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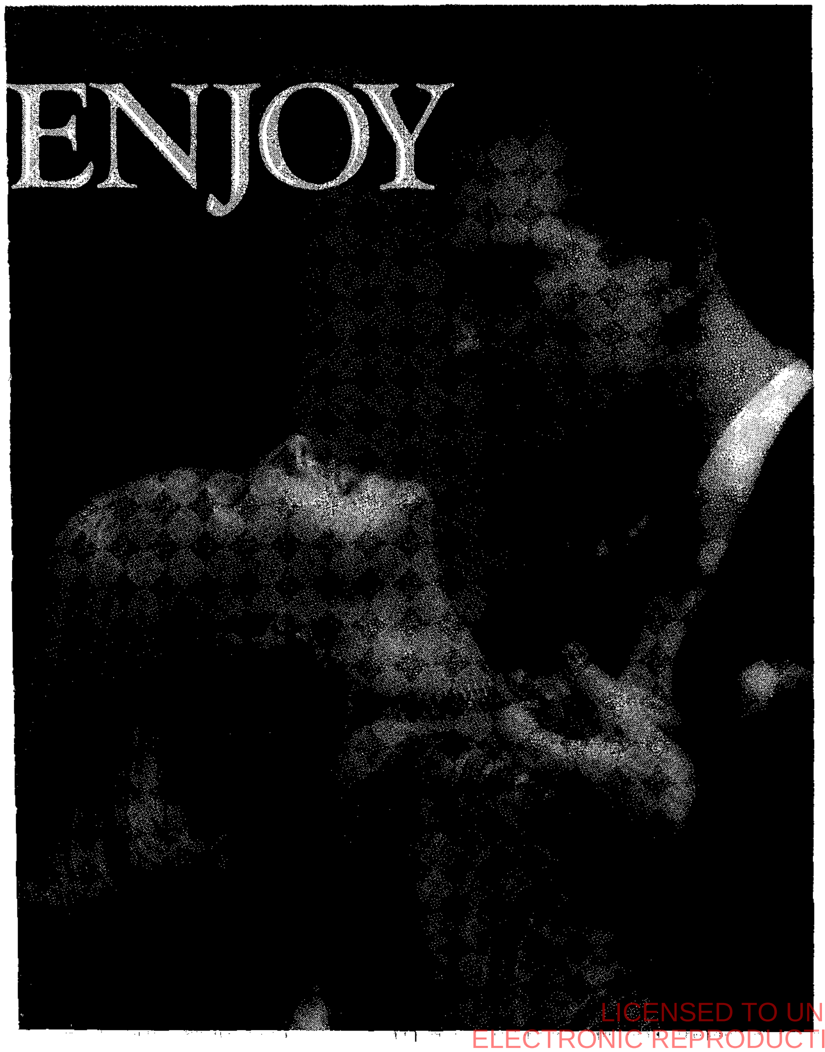
ton said that in a public space it might not even be possible to point to a specific "work" by the artist; the work would be the space itself, and its effect on the people in it. All this would require a certain abandonment of ego on the artist's part. It would require a willingness to collaborate with others —architects, engineers, municipal authorities, local community groups— and an ability to deal with political and social realities. The danger was that those pressures from the outside, non-art sphere would neutralize the artist's vision and keep it from operating effectively, but that seemed a risk worth taking. Armajani was under no illusions that the sort of work he wanted to do would appeal to everybody. "Public art is not popular art," he told me. "It is public because it is out there, but the lowest common denominator is not what rules. I feel we need a dialogue with the public, but that doesn't mean accepting a lot of restrictive conditions. It does mean some interplay with the public, and some shared assumptions."

What those shared assumptions might be has not yet become clear, to Armajani or to anyone else. In the early nineteen-eighties, though, a few farsighted sponsors were casting about for new approaches to public art. One of the most imaginative patrons was the City of Seattle, which in 1973 had set aside one per cent of its capital-improvement funds for spending on the arts. Seattle came up with an innovative program to involve local artists in all kinds of municipal projects, from sidewalks to electrical substations. In 1981, the Seattle Arts Commission initiated and coördinated an ambitious, federally funded project involving five artists—Armajani, Burton, Martin Puryear, George Trakas, and Douglas Hollis—on the grounds of the Western Regional Center of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration. The site was a broad strip of land that lay between the NOAA complex and Lake Washington; it had been owned for fifty years by the United States Navy, which had kept it off limits to the public. The five artists came to Seattle to survey the site, and they came back a number of times after that to meet and talk with NOAA officials and employees and to attend meetings of local citizens who wanted to know what was being done with the land. It became a real public-art process. Armajani tried to persuade the four other artists to work together with him on a single, over-all plan for the site; three agreed, but the fourth did not, so each one chose his own spot and did something different. The five environmental works, spread out over the site and connected by footpaths, did end up complementing one another in various ways, though, and not one of them looked like a piece of sculpture. Puryear's concrete-and-glass mound resembled the top of a large, spherical rock buried in the earth. Burton, the most function-oriented of the new public artists, dredged up glacial rocks from the lake and shaped them into rough-hewn chairs and benches. Trakas built a wood-and-steel platform at the shoreline, a place where you could get close to the water and view the wildflowers that grew there. Hollis built a "sound garden" of tall steel poles that produced muted sounds when the wind blew. Armajani's contributions were two chunky, concrete bridges, spanning low spots in the terrain and bearing, on their railings and their arched walkways, an extended quotation from "Moby Dick." One of the NOAA scientists, in describing his research to the five artists, had quoted from "Moby Dick" on the proliferation of ocean fishes, and this had given Armajani the idea. At the last of the public meetings in Seattle, after an eloquent and stirring statement by Burton on public art, Armajani got up and said simply that people could like or dislike his bridges but they couldn't say anything against Melville. Then he sat down, to sustained applause.

AT about the same time that Armajani and Burton were asked to take part in the NOAA project, they were also invited to enter a competition for a major public commission in New York City. The site was a three-and-a-half-acre waterfront plaza in Battery Park City, the huge (ninety-two-acre) addition to lower Manhattan which had been created in large part by taking the earth and rock excavated to build the World Trade Center and using them as landfill in the Hudson River. Conceived in 1968 as a mixed commercial and residential district, Battery Park City had become a municipal nightmare. The project had run out of funds and had lain dormant from 1974 to 1979, when the state's Urban Development Corporation took it over and drew up a new master plan, under which forty-two per cent of the area would be residential, nine per cent would be commercial, and thirty per cent would be open public space. (The remaining nineteen per cent was needed for streets and sidewalks.) Richard Kahan, the first chairman of a revamped Battery Park City Authority, pushed through a novel provision under which real-estate developers involved in the project had to set aside a small percentage of their total budget to commission works of art in the public spaces, and a Fine Arts Committee was appointed to advise the authority on art and artists. The chairman of this committee was Victor Ganz, a well-known collector and a trustee of the Whitney Museum. Ganz had done a good deal of thinking about public art. He had spent a summer refreshing his memories of the Piazza Navona, in Rome, the Place des Vosges, in Paris, and other great public spaces in Europe, and one of his conclusions had been that Battery Park City could do without "plop art." It turned out that most of the members of his committee, which included several museum curators and art historians, felt the same way. There was, in addition, a nearly unanimous consensus on the committee that instead of asking artists to make something for a space that was already a fait accompli the artists should be brought in at the earliest stages of the design process, so that their thinking could become part of that process.

The first public space scheduled for completion under the master plan was the large waterfront plaza. It embraced a rectangular indentation in the waterfront called the North Cove, and it was going to be bounded on the east side by the World Financial Center, a complex of four high-rise office buildings being designed by Cesar Pelli. Architecturally speaking, it was a difficult site, with a wide, asymmetrical center section and two wings enclosing the North Cove. It was estimated that between eighty thousand and a hundred thousand office workers were going to pass through it every day. The waterfront plaza would be one of the main orientation points in Battery Park City, and, in view of its importance, Ganz's committee decided to sponsor a competition among a selected group of artists, who would be asked to visit the site and come up with a plan for its development. After months of deliberation, the list was narrowed down to seven candidates: Robert Irwin, Athena Tacha, Robert Morris, Richard Fleischner, Harriet Feigenbaum, and Siah Armajani and Scott Burton, who were asked to work together as a team. (The team suggestion came from Linda Shearer, the former Guggenheim curator, who was at that time the executive director of the nonprofit organization Artists Space. Shearer knew Burton and Armajani well, and she thought their ideas would complement each other, a notion with which both artists immediately concurred.) When the committee voted subsequently to award the commission to Armajani and Burton, one of the deciding elements was a sense that they would be able to keep their own artistic egos in check, and collaborate not only with each other but with all the players in the high-stakes game of urban development.

The most important player was



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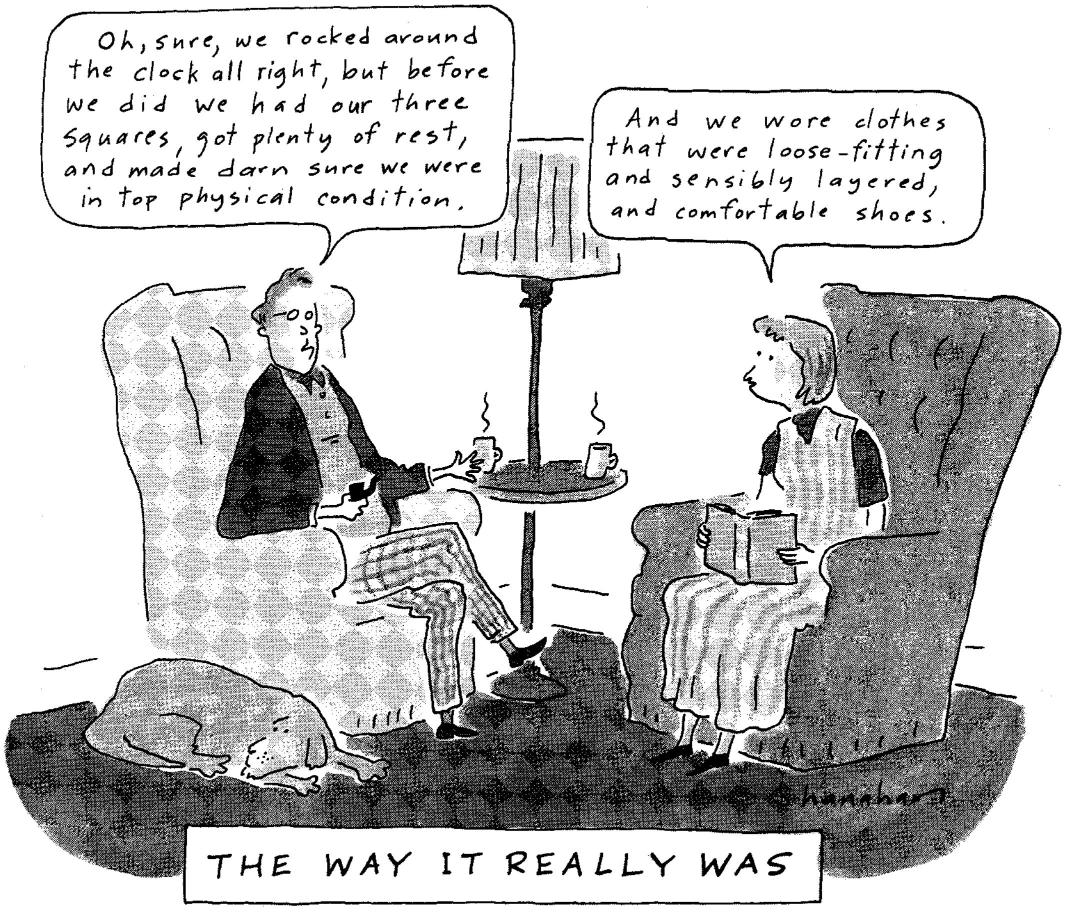
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THE WAY IT REALLY WAS

• •

Pelli. A brilliantly successful architect with an international reputation, he had been horrified to learn that he was going to have to collaborate with an artist (or artists) on the design for the plaza. Unable to head off this unpleasant intrusion into what he considered his own design responsibility, he had insisted on adding two artists of his choosing, Fleischner and Feigenbaum, to the list of finalists. He attended the daylong meeting during which the artists, one after another, presented their ideas and their scale models to the Fine Arts Committee. "Naturally, I had my own ideas about the plaza," Pelli told me last spring. "The plaza was an integral part of the design of the buildings: it not only had to be beautiful on its own, it had to be right for the buildings. My fears were compounded by several of the artists' proposals, which may have been very good in themselves but certainly would not have been good for the buildings. There was also another reason for my concern. I did not look forward to being saddled with the task of controlling people who might turn out to be capricious, erratic, and uncontrollable." After the artists had made their presentations at the meeting, the committee asked Pelli for his reactions. Robert Irwin's proposal had been by far the most impressively thought-out in terms of the site and the architecture of the World Financial Center, he said, but it had left little or no room for adjustment and collaboration. The artists he would feel most comfortable working with, he said, were Armajani and Burton. Pelli's statement carried considerable weight with some committee members, but it irritated others. In the end, the committee members voted for Armajani and Burton because they liked their plan, but they also thought that Armajani and Burton could hold their own in dealing with Pelli.

By some miracle of personality and self-restraint, the collaboration turned out to be a real one. Pelli, who was born in Argentina, is a courtly and considerate man and also a highly intelligent one. In his early meetings with Armajani and Burton, he had the grace to set aside his own thoughts about the plaza and to focus exclusively on theirs. The two artists had made a detailed scale model that divided the plaza into three main areas. The north end, which would get full sun year-round, was to be a sort of winter garden, with shelter from the wind, and tables and chairs, and a feeling of warm brick and stone. The south end would be mostly gardens—a formal garden and an informal garden—with running water and lots of shade to help people stay cool on hot days. The central section was to remain mostly open space, but the inner wall of the cove, on the water, would be built out in the form of a large arc, to provide a point of focus for the entire waterfront plaza.

From the start, the main problems were financial. The budget for the plaza itself had been set at thirteen million dollars, but hidden costs kept cropping up, for such necessities as underground plumbing and wiring, and, as a result, one design element after another had to be scrapped or scaled down. There were also some difficulties in communication. Armajani and Burton would talk about using water in a certain area—thinking of water as a material, like stone or foliage—and Pelli's architectural staff would translate that into "fountain," which the artists hadn't meant at all. After several weeks of meetings and discussions, though, the three men understood each other a lot better, and a feeling of mutual trust developed. A similar process unfolded in their subsequent association with M. Paul Friedberg, the landscape architect who had been assigned by Olympia & York, the developer, as a fourth member of the design team. "Siah's philosophical view gave me another perspective on the work I've been engaged in for the last thirty years," Friedberg said later.

At the end of four months, however, so many problems had emerged in relation to the Armajani-Burton design that the two artists decided to put it aside and start again from scratch. "Pelli allowed us to tear our own scheme apart," Burton said afterward.

"It was a very generous act on their part," Pelli said. "An extraordinary demonstration of maturity."

As Armajani saw it, "the great thing was that Cesar was willing to listen, and so were we."

Their true collaboration began at this point. It involved a constant effort to reconcile the differences between an architect's need for careful planning and strict cost accounting and an artist's need for an experimental, trial-and-error approach. "We spent many hours discussing what working in the public arena really meant," Pelli says, "and we found that, by and large, we all thought alike—the main goals were shared. But in smaller matters there were as many differences between Scott and Siah as there were between them and me!"

Burton was more committed to functionalism than Armajani was. A mercurial, effervescent man who began as a painter, spent ten years as a writer, and then was drawn back into the visual area as a conceptualist and performance artist, he had found his real direction in the early seventies, as a maker of sculpture that functions as furniture—rock chairs, onyx tables with interior light sources, wood and metal and glass pieces that are powerfully sculptural but can also be used. Burton died last December, of AIDS, at the age of fifty. None of his many friends mourned him more deeply than Armajani did. During the initial stages of their work together on the Battery Park City competition model, Burton had gone out to stay with Barbara and Siah in St. Paul. The Armajanis, who have no children, live comfortably and quite conventionally in a Victorian house that they have restored to its original, 1903 condition. Both of them work very hard, and Burton, whose New York life used to take place mainly at night, discovered during his stay with them the discreet charm of regular hours. He got up at six every morning, had a big breakfast, spent all day working in the Minneapolis studio, came back to a large, hot dinner (Barbara is an accomplished cook), and went to bed early, and in the process he came to admire Armajani even more than he had before. "I've never known anyone else who is so spontaneously a good person," Burton told me afterward. "There's something Tolstoyan about Siah, although he's not a moralizer. He can be fierce and unyielding

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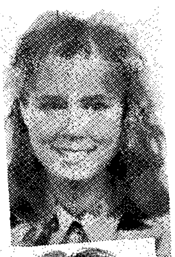
when he disagrees, but he projects an extraordinary aura of kindness. He accepts me, although my life couldn't be more different from his. We do argue, of course. We often argue about functionalism—he keeps urging me not to forget the nonfunctional elements in functional works. Siah and I had our only serious fight in one of those meetings with Pelli, over the issue of monumentality. Siah was very much against putting a vertical element in the middle of the plaza. I wanted something in that particular spot, a sort of centering device, but he was against it. His philosophy is not ever to be impressive or authoritarian. I have a perverse fascination with those elements. I'd had the idea that we could get a lot of nineteenth-century bronze sculptures from other parts of the city, things that were in bad repair, maybe, and group them there. And then I'd had the notion of getting a cast of Bartholdi's half-size model for the Statue of Liberty—it's in Paris, I think. Cesar loved that idea, but Siah hated it; he thought it was cynical. Maybe he was right. Anyway, the question of the vertical element in the plaza was finally resolved. We noticed that the arcade of Cesar's building had rather squat columns, and we decided to take those as sort of 'found' dimensions for a central column, or torchère, with a light on top. Siah could agree with this when we took it from the arcade—there was a rationale."

The waterfront plaza was opened to the public in the spring of 1989. A few of the artists' original design elements are there, including the formal and informal gardens, at the south end, and the wide, sweeping arc that extends the plaza out over the water in the North Cove. (The cove itself is now being leased as an anchorage for oceangoing yachts, a development that nobody on the design team had anticipated.) Scott Burton's handiwork shows in the simple, elegant stone tables and seats at the north end; the railing that divides the central section, with quotations from poems by Walt Whitman and Frank O'Hara worked into the design in large individual bronze letters, is clearly Armajani's. But the unified design of the plaza is a true collaboration, and most of the features that were not part of the Armajani-Burton competition model came about as a result of the collaborative process. A lot of good ideas fell victim to the budgetary axe along the way. The arc almost did. Both the Battery Park City Authority and Olympia & York tried again and again to delete the arc, because it was going to cost so much, but the artists would not give an inch on that issue. For both of them, the experience was a harrowing one but on the whole a good one; they learned a lot, and, if the end result was something less than they had hoped for, it was still an impressive demonstration of what artists could do in the public arena. Pelli has said that the completed plaza is better than the original Armajani-Burton design and better than anything he would have designed on his own, and the reactions of other architects and of architecture critics and the public have so far been highly enthusiastic.

Pelli was so stimulated by the collaboration, in fact, that he asked Armajani to work with him on the design for the top of the Yerba Buena Tower, a high-rise office building in San Francisco. "The building top is an element of the architecture, like the colonnade at the base, but much more so," Pelli says. "Here the functional requirements are slight and the formal opportunities are great, so this is a very good area for collaboration, where the architect can stretch the natural boundaries of architecture and the public artist can stretch the natural boundaries of public art." In design sessions that took place over a period of several months, Pelli and Armajani moved from a relatively simple concept of a mast within a tower to an immense sculptural array of vertical and diagonal forms—a building top that is nearly a third as tall as the building itself. (Construction has been delayed, for financial reasons, but is expected to start soon.) Pelli's firm was also doing two office buildings in Minneapolis at the time, and Pelli got Armajani to help him design two of the elevated pedestrian causeways that connect many of the downtown buildings in that winter-dreading city. Armajani managed to get one of them built as a true, self-supporting bridge; it lends an arched, Florentine look to a fairly drab street.

IN spite of the pleasure that these collaborations have brought him, Armajani no longer sees his future in terms of working with architects. He doubts whether the kind of relationship he has built up with Pelli could be duplicated with anyone else, and his



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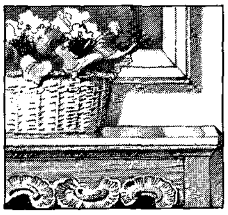
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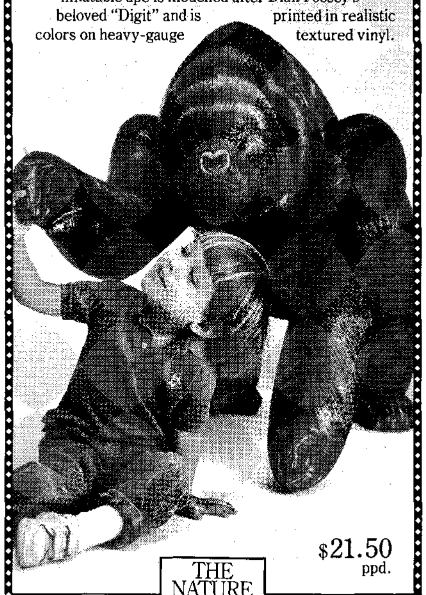
experience suggests to him that architects and artists are incompatible by nature. “Our point of view, our historical heritage are so different,” he said to me recently. “We have different sensibilities and values, and we speak different languages. The way I look at a project is totally different from the way an architect looks at it. Artists are for open-ended design; we have to leave things open to question, to contemplation. No, it is more accidental than normal that Cesar and I have been able to work together.”

A year or so ago, Armajani went through a stage of feeling profoundly disillusioned about public art. The movement had succeeded too well and too quickly, he felt. The idea of getting artists to work on urban and suburban projects of all kinds had proved to be so popular throughout the country during the previous few years that nearly every state had set up its own public-art program, and so many artists were trying to get on design teams that the original incentive was becoming vitiated and bureaucratized. “Public art was a promise that became a nightmare,” Armajani said last spring. “Our revolution has been stolen from us, and now it is our job to get it back. In the first place, the idea of a design team just doesn’t work. Cesar and Scotty and I went through a lot together, and we came to understand each other very well, but the kind of design team that just gets together around a table is like a situation comedy. It is cynical and unproductive. Genuine debate can’t take place around a table that way. You get what the real-estate developer and the arts administrator want, because they control the money. The whole emphasis in most of those projects is on who can get along best with the others involved—at the expense of vision and fresh thinking. It is like that story about the two thieves who hole up in an abandoned restaurant to plan their next job. While they are plotting in the basement kitchen, the dumbwaiter comes down, and there is an order for fried chicken, Southern style. ‘What shall we do?’ asks one. ‘Quick, fill the order,’ says the other, ‘or they’ll come and find us.’ So they send up some fried chicken, Southern style. But then another order comes down, and another, and another, and they keep filling them and sending them up. This is what has happened to our revolution.”

Having tried collaboration, Armajani has decided that public artists should go it alone. The fact that he was able to do this on the Irene Hixon Whitney Bridge has been immensely encouraging to him. Armajani had no collaborators on that project: the Department of Transportation contracted with him to design the bridge, and he hired the structural engineers. He had the same sort of design control over a “Covered Walkway” that he recently completed for General Mills in Minneapolis—a striking, six-hundred-and-ninety-five-foot-long steel-and-glass structure that is the largest commissioned work in the firm’s developing sculpture garden, as well as a shelter for employees on their way from the parking lot to the office building. There are a great many projects of this kind that could be taken over by artists, he says—projects that are usually directed by technicians who give little thought to the aesthetics of design. “We are in the second stage of our revolution,” Armajani says. “Artists can now begin to reject projects that call for collaboration. We have really been talking about public art only since 1967 or so, and that is no long history, after all. Now we are adjusting and reëvaluating. We need to annex more territory for sculpture. Of course, we also have to recognize that art has its limits. Art by itself cannot bring about social changes. But art in concert with other forces can make a difference. We can be citizens with something to offer besides self-analysis. We can be part of society, and not just a small élite supported by a wealthy minority.”

Armajani’s future work could very well move in directions that nobody foresees at the moment. A series of beautifully crafted “Elements” that have come from his studio since 1985 are architecturally oriented but more mysterious and even less functional-looking than the “Dictionary for Building” pieces he was doing before. Function may be an important aspect of his work, but there has always been something strange and obdurately nonfunctional at the heart of it. The new pieces do not sell very easily. “Some



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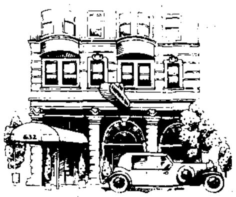

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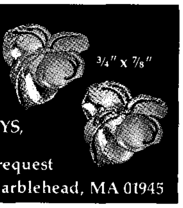

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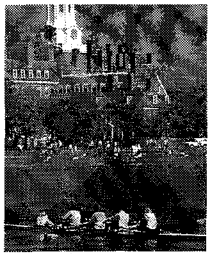

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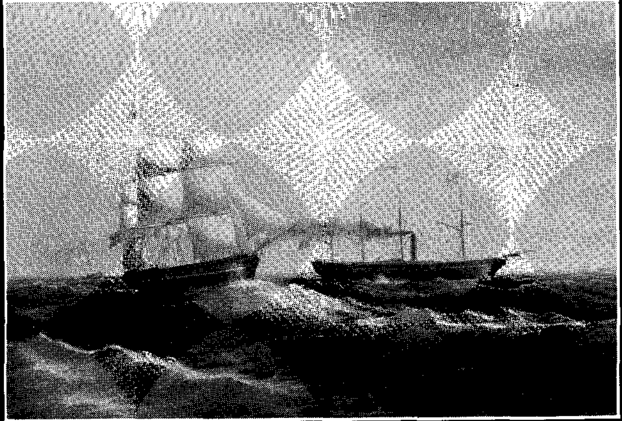

"Monongahela the Great Western", 36" x 53¼", oil on canvas.
Signed on verso, circa 1842.

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museums and corporations have bought them, but there's no real market for Siah among the big collectors," Max Protetch, his dealer, says. "There's an uncertainty about what he does and whether it's art or not. Not that he cares. He won't go to parties or schmooze with clients. A dinner after his show opens at my gallery? Forget it. The other day, he called me up from Minneapolis and said, 'Max, jack up the prices.' I said, 'Siah, what's come over you?' He said, 'That's an expression I just heard. Did I use it right?' " The danger of his being tempted to join the art world, at any rate, is about as remote as the danger of his withdrawing into some form of ivory tower.

When we were having lunch together in New York recently, Armajani told me a Sufi story. "A man orders his servant to go to the market and buy a pound of sugar and a pound of salt, each of the purest, whitest quality. He gives the servant a platter, and says to him, 'Remember, the key word is "separation." ' The servant goes to the market, and eventually he returns, carrying the platter. He says to the master, 'Here is the salt, the purest and whitest available.' Then he turns the platter over, saying, 'And there was the sugar.' In public art, you see, the key word is not 'separation.' "

—Calvin Tomkins

•

WORLD'S END

On the last day of exile

the new will be known, like an old shoe
that, no matter how old, still pinched
one's foot or, because old, collected
so many harsh and stinging pebbles

as you went back and forth
over the dusty trails,
among the boulevards and graveyards
of remote and savage countries,

all in the hope
of recovering yet again
the fabulous solace
of one's true and original home

now that you're free
to go away and return,
as before you'd been free
to go away and leave,

as Adam once was, or Eve

—Robert Mazzocco

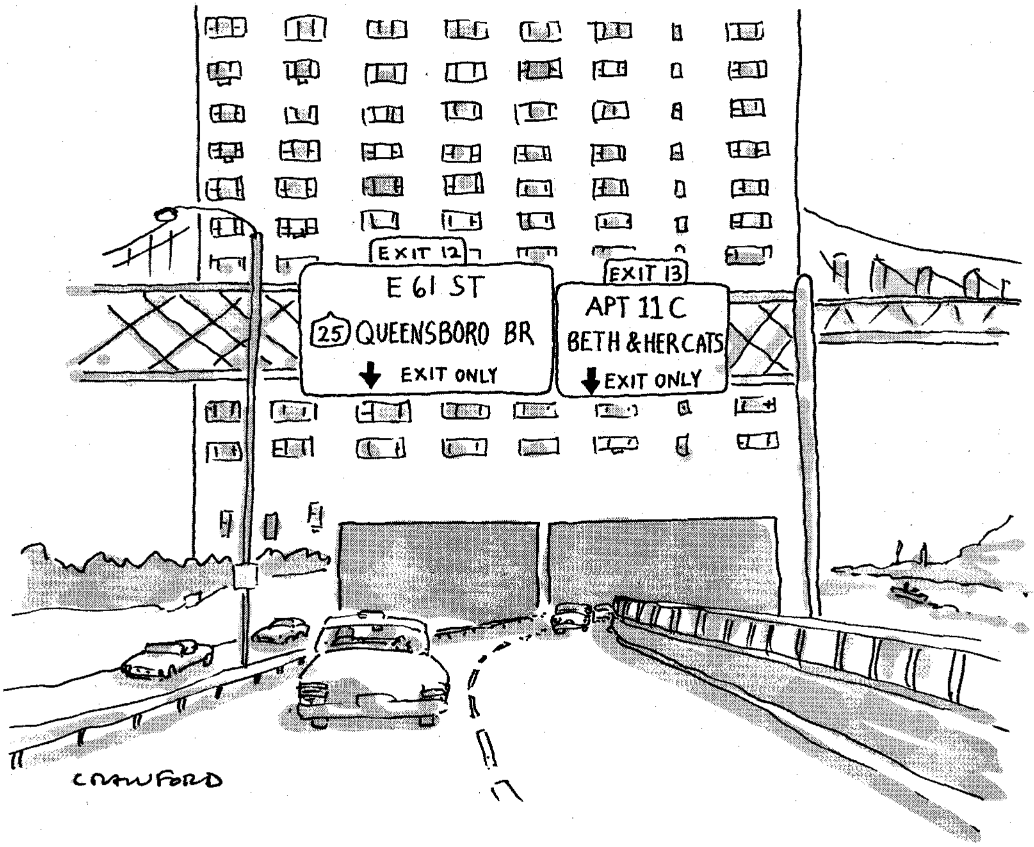
A REPORTER AT LARGE

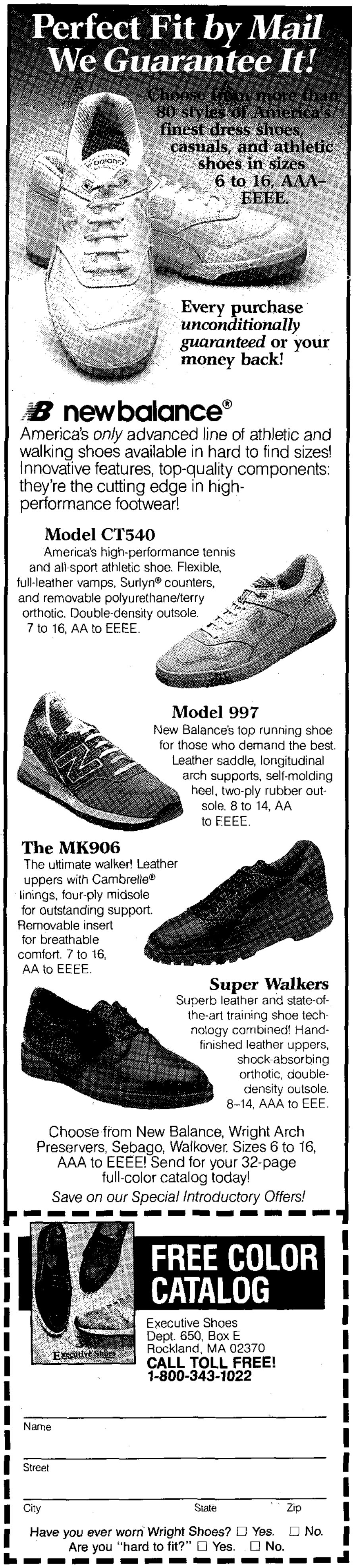
DECENT EXPOSURE

ON Vassar Street in Rochester, each house except Morley and Mary Lou Schloss's has a tidy green lawn. Their front yard is a vegetable garden, tangled with shoots and stalks. On Saturday morning, last June 24th, lengths of twine ravelled with pole-bean runners and morning glories stretched from posts in the garden to the wooden beams of a second-story sun porch. Ripening tomatoes, lettuce, and zucchini lay under the shelter of broad, lush leaves. Morley Schloss stood on his front porch that morning and looked out into the foliage, which was so thick it nearly hid the house from street view. He was naked except for the smallest of bathing suits—European-style mini-briefs, which he wears as a concession to his neighbors and to the New York State Penal Code, which forbids men and women to appear in public naked. Schloss, forty-eight, is an elementary-school administrator and a nudist. He has a head of thick gray hair, a luxuriant beard, and no tan lines on his well-burnished skin, which he likes to keep outdoors in the sun as much as possible. His wife, Mary Lou, who is also a nudist, came out to join him on the porch. She was wearing Bermuda shorts, Birkenstock sandals, and a tank top with the words "I'd Rather Be in Rochester Topfree" on it. Mrs. Schloss, forty-one, has a soft, ample figure; her gray hair is short-cropped; and she wears owlish eyeglasses. Since 1986, the Schlosses have been among the leaders of the Coalition for Topfree Equality, a group of women and men—all of whom are feminists and some of whom practice and advocate social nudism as a way of life—who take a picnic to a public place on a Saturday in June and remove their shirts, knowing that the women may be arrested. June 24th was the day of the 1989 Topfree Equality Picnic.

New York's law against nudity, passed in 1984, says that a woman is nude if her breasts are exposed in public for any reason other than to nurse an infant or to perform as entertainment. In 1986, to test the law, Mary Lou Schloss and eight other women took off their shirts in Rochester's Cobbs Hill Park. Seven refused to put their shirts back on when ordered to do so by the police and were arrested. In the trial that followed, the defense brought a naked Barbie doll to the witness stand so that Melissa Farley, a feminist psychologist from Iowa City, could use Barbie's idealized breasts to demonstrate society's unrealistic image of the female body. The defense witnesses also included Marilyn Story, a professor of family studies at the University of Northern Iowa, who said that the female breast was in fact not a sex organ and actually had the same number of nerve endings as the male breast. The charges against the Topfree Seven, as one of the group, Ramona Santorelli, christened them, were eventually dismissed, but the women were not happy. City Court Judge Herman J. Walz, Jr., decided that when the women took their shirts off they were exercising their right of free expression as guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution. The Topfree Seven felt that they were entitled to be protected by the First Amendment, but it was the Fourteenth Amendment they were concentrating on. For them, the New York State law prohibiting the exposure of a woman's breasts not only infringes on women's free expression; more important, it deprives them of a basic freedom that men enjoy. That is why they felt frustrated when they won their case on First Amendment grounds. They wanted the judge to strike down a law that they believe violates women's rights. For the nudists among them, abolishing the law that treats women differently from men was a matter of equality of the sexes, and more; it would be a step on the way to gaining the right to sunbathe nude on a public beach.

There were Topfree Equality Picnics in 1987 and 1988, but in neither year was anybody arrested. On this sunny morning in June—a day perfect for gardening or for reading a book on the front porch—the Schlosses' house was busy with last-minute preparations for the 1989 picnic, which was being

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held for the first time on a beach, where people without shirts are a common sight. Friends came and went in various stages of dishabille, carrying picnic baskets and filling food containers. ("Bring a Dish to Pass!" said their handbill, which was emblazoned with a drawing of the Statue of Liberty naked except for an American flag draped across her hips and thighs, and with hair drawn in the armpit of the arm holding the torch.) We were introduced to "Bill from Florida," who had recently arrived in a motor home, now parked across the street. Bill carried a fresh head of lettuce from the garden to the Schlosses' kitchen, which was cluttered with pots and bowls of herbs and spices. On a bulletin board, notes of committee meetings and cultural events were posted. In the living room, the Schlosses' nine-year-old son, Evan, sprawled on a sofa (their twelve-year-old daughter, Hilary, was away at camp). Sunlight streaming through a cluster of potted plants in a living-room window cast a bleary light on a painting of clouds that hung on a wall above him. It is a house that smells of wholegrain muffins and honey, a house completely comfortable in its inelegant skin, littered with kids' toys.

The part of the Schlosses' house of which they are proudest is the basement. Here they have installed an eleven-by-twenty-two-foot swimming pool, a whirlpool spa, and a sauna, and have brightened the dank room by painting the tentaclelike pipes of their furnace in vivid colors: you can float on your back in the pool and look up at a rainbow of ductwork. Nudists from the Rochester area use these facilities regularly, and there are signs on the wall in the changing room requesting contributions for pool chemicals and utility bills and asking that visitors bring their own towels. One sign, written in different-color marking pens, says, "People Whose Chins Are Less Than 3½ Feet High Should Swim Only with Another Person in the Pool or Watching." On the door leading upstairs is a sign written with crayon in a child's scrawl: "Please Remember, the Upstairs Is the Schloss Family Home. So Please Leave Quietly. Thank You." The Schlosses are active members of the American Sunbathing Association, the country's oldest and largest nudist organization, though they have had quarrels with the A.S.A. about a former policy of running a good many nude photographs of slender young women in the A.S.A. newsletter, *The Bulletin;* such pictures, they protested, tended to frighten away women with less than perfect figures. The Schlosses describe themselves as both nudists and naturists. Traditionally, nudists have tended to be club people, gathering, like members of a semisecret society, in the seclusion of a private camp or resort. Naturists are more likely to be interested in fighting for the right to disrobe in public recreation areas, such as beaches and parks. To the Schlosses, however, the distinction is petty. "We are all looking for the same thing," Mary Lou says. "We want safe, nice locations for nude recreation, whether they are private or public."

That morning, their phone rang constantly: fellow-demonstrators checking on the site of the picnic; local radio stations wanting comments. The picnic was scheduled for eleven in the morning, but the exact site was not yet public knowledge. The first year, the police and the press had been alerted in advance, and when the Topfree demonstrators arrived at the designated picnic spot they found a squad of police officers, six police cars, and a paddy wagon. Then, when the women took their shirts off, they were surrounded by a mob of leering, catcalling men. Starting in 1987, the members of the Coalition for Topfree Equality have not broadcast the particulars in the days before the picnic, although their handbill this time said exactly where it would take place—at Durand-Eastman Park beach, across from King's Highway. Morley Schloss explained that because the handbill was posted only in friendly places—local health-food stores, vegetarian restaurants, and the Genesee Co-op—they weren't worried that word would leak out to the wrong people. He also said that once the demonstrators had assembled and taken their tops off he and a couple of the other men would let the press know where they were.

The Schlosses drove to the beach with a small caravan of cars. Their maroon Plymouth Voyager has bumper stickers proclaiming "Nudist in Car," "Have a Nude Day," "Nude Is Natural," "Steph's Pond—Naturally" (Steph's Pond is a nearby clothing-optional campground), "Card-Carrying Member of the A.C.L.U.," and "You Can't Hug a Child with Nuclear Arms." The Durand-Eastman beach is on the shore of Lake Ontario, and at that moment in nature's cycle it did not bring to mind the majesty of the great outdoors. Alewives had been dying and washing up on the shore and rotting in the sun. Along with dead fish, the sand was littered with cans, broken glass, cardboard fast-food cartons, and cigarette butts. As the Schlosses walked down a ten-foot embankment to the beach, joined by half a dozen friends who had been waiting up in the parking area, they seemed not to notice the debris. Despite predictions of rain, the sun was out, and as the picnickers reached the sand they looked up at the sky and congratulated themselves, joking that the sun must be shining because of their good karma. "Volleyball poles! Volleyball net!" Morley announced to no one in particular, handing the equipment to volunteers who would look for a place on the beach to set it up.

The women removed their shirts without ceremony. They were now topfree—"topless," they say, suggests that something is missing and, further, smacks of silicone-implanted women dancing in strip joints. The picnic food was laid out on a folding table: pasta and tabouli salads, a big watermelon cut in slices, heavy muffins in a basket. Beach blankets were arranged close together, like the wagons of uneasy pioneers. Some people tried to clear broken glass from the makeshift volleyball court, but no one seemed eager to play. Most of the children and a few adults went swimming, among them Sarah Wells, with her German shepherd, Rooper. By noon, there were about seventy-five women and men sitting on blankets and talking about breasts and freedom.

"This is very difficult for me," Mary Lou Schloss said. "I've been a nudist for sixteen years, and it is very difficult for me to go to the public park and take my top off. In a nudist park, this is the expected behavior—it's O.K. You see, I am very conventional. I never saw a nude male body until the usual time—when you have sex with someone."

Morley Schloss, whose enthusiasm is sometimes so great that he can't help interrupting, said that he knew a man in Rochester who was arrested in the thirties for driving his truck without a shirt. If men hadn't broken the law back then by going to the beach without tops, he said, he, too, could be forced to wear a shirt today. There used to be a New York State parks regulation specifying that men must be "covered with a bathing suit having both shirt and trunks properly supported with straps or other devices which must be kept in place at all times." In 1936, two years after Clark Gable shocked audiences by baring his chest in "It Happened One Night," Robert Moses, the state parks commissioner, successfully proposed a change in the regulation to allow men on the beach in trunks and no shirts.

The people on the Lake Ontario beach talked a good deal about the importance of what they were doing, because their movement has been criticized, even by some sympathetic to feminist causes, as trivial. In 1986, one of the columnist Ellen Goodman's annual misogyny awards—given to

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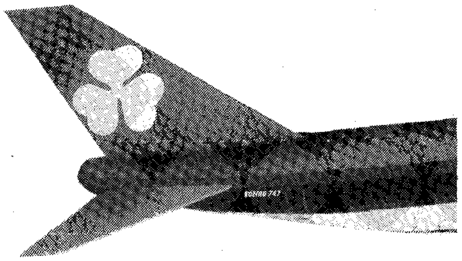

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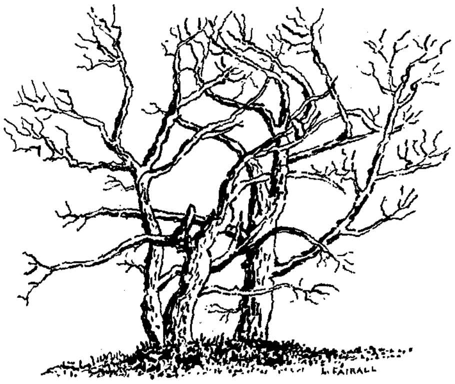
"those who have done their utmost in the past twelve months to slow the progress of women"—went to the original Rochester Topfree Seven. But to those who took off their shirts on the beach, then and since, the law's unequal treatment of women's bodies is anything but trivial: it is discrimination. Kathie Reilly, one of the original Topfree Seven, was on hand for this year's picnic. A forty-three-year-old librarian and cabaret singer, she said she believed that there ought to be more clothing-optional beaches, but that for her being shirtless on the beach was a matter of women's rights, not naturism. As she sat on a blanket wearing only a pair of black nylon underpants, she explained why she took off her top: "You see guys going out on a summer day with a fishing rod and they take off their shirts and frolic around. That kind of ease and sense of enjoyment and pleasure in one's own body that a boy gets, and takes for granted, girls do not have."

Tierney O'Brien-Dovan, another veteran protester, said that breasts were at the heart of her life's interests. She is a breast-feeding mother, then nursing her third child, aged two. "My reason for being topfree is that I want more women to feel free to nurse their babies," she said. She spoke of having been asked to leave a department store a few years ago for nursing in public. The security guard who evicted her was a black man, she said. "I asked him, 'Why are you doing this?' He said it was regulations. I said, 'You mean like going to the back of the bus?' He didn't say much after that."

On one side of the encampment sat three girls with crewcuts, two of whom were wearing baroque black-lace brassieres. They said they were members of the Racial Unity Skinhead movement, and were newcomers to the annual Topfree rally. They made it clear that they were good skinheads, unlike the white-power skinheads, who in their opinion are nothing but bald racists. They said that they regularly engaged in fistfights with the bad skinheads. The Racial Unity Skinhead women had already had a busy summer. A young woman, whose shaved head and nose stud didn't jibe with a face that could belong to a Victorian doll, rolled her eyes back in deep thought as she recalled all they had done. "Today, we protested all morning with the pro-choice people," she said. "Last week, we were at the Oak Hill Country Club with the Anti-Apartheid Coalition. Next, we're going to a march with the gay community for the anniversary of Stonewall"—the Greenwich Village bar raided by police in 1969 because it was patronized by homosexuals.

Ninety minutes after the picnic began, many participants had begun to think that this year would be like the last two—nothing would happen. That was seen as good, because nobody was eager to get arrested, but it was seen as bad, too, because there was a law they wanted to strike down, and getting arrested was one way to attack it. Just three years after bare breasts created pandemonium in Cobbs Hill Park, was it possible that no one cared that a Topfree demonstration was taking place? There were indications that the demonstrators were being noticed. About fifty yards out in the water, several pleasure boats had anchored, and men on the boats were looking at the beach with binoculars. And was it significant that on such a nice day very few people had strolled along the sand past the Topfree picnic? At about a quarter to one, a young man wearing a red T-shirt and shorts and carrying a toddler came along the sand. He stopped when he saw the women with exposed breasts. "I wouldn't have went this way if I had known," he said shyly, and turned around and retraced his steps.

Just a hard volleyball serve away from the picnic, however, sat Bob Marapese, a Rochester bus driver, with his wife, Darlene, and their two adolescent daughters, and with two matching Pekinese dogs that were tethered to a post. The elder Marapeses were relaxing in beach chairs drinking Budweiser and considering the bare breasts nearby. "I don't think they should be doing it—it's disgusting," Mrs. Marapese said. "They're all fat and they sag. If they were slim with small breasts, it would be better." She glanced down at her own amplitude, encased in a blue latex suit. "I'm ashamed of my body. I wouldn't do it."



Twelve-year-old Lynne Marapese said, "It's disgusting."

"You better not go to a nude beach when you grow up," Mrs. Marapese said to her daughter.

"It's her body," Bob Marapese said. "She can do what she wants with it."

His wife excused his liberal views by explaining that he was a weekend artist and painted murals.

At a little before one o'clock, a boat from the Monroe County Sheriff's Department joined the small fleet anchored offshore. One of the demonstrators, Sarah Wells, swam out to make contact with two lawmen on the boat.

"What are you doing?" asked Sheriff's Deputy C. George Zink, a twenty-nine-year-veteran state trooper attached to the Parks and Marine Division.

"Swimming!" Ms. Wells called back, treading water near the hull of the boat. "You can take your top off. Why can't I? Come join us. Take your top off!" Ms. Wells swam back to shore, and the deputies stood on the deck of the boat looking through binoculars.

At one o'clock, two more Sheriff's Deputies—Charles Campanella and Michael Roland—walked down to the beach from the parking area. In the presence of the lawmen, who were dressed in starched navy-blue shirts and creased trousers, with the heavy hardware of their profession jangling from their belts, the bare-breasted demonstrators looked truly naked for the first time that day. The policemen walked a hundred feet along the beach, their shoes crunching alewives and making big oval eddies in the wet sand. They went straight to the bare-breasted Sarah Wells and ordered her to get her dog off the beach. No dogs were allowed, with or without a leash, they said. That was an unforeseen turn of events: the Topfree picnickers had not expected to get into trouble for having a dog on the beach. As Sarah Wells, complying, prepared to take Rooper up to her car, the sheriff's boat made its way toward shore, sounding a series of warning beeps as it came right up to the sand.

Deputy Zink climbed over the prow and down onto the beach, and conferred with Deputies Campanella and Roland.

"What are we going to do?" Campanella asked.

"I don't know, but we've got to start doing something," Roland answered.

"What do you want me to do—take them in the boat, or what?" Zink asked. He then walked among the women, saying, "Everybody, either put your top on or we're going to have to take you in. The police wagon is on the way. Any female who doesn't put her top on will be arrested."

There was some feeble debate as the police moved among the bare-breasted women. Someone asked, "Why should we? Why don't men have to put their tops on?"

Morley Schloss, in his mini-briefs, walked up to Deputy Zink and asked, "Why don't you want me to put my top on?"

Zink answered, "Because you are a man."

The argument went no further. The police officers looked uncomfortable on the beach as the sun glinted on their bright silver badges and sand trickled into the tops of their brogues. They began going from woman to woman, asking each one if she wanted to put her top on or to be arrested. About thirty women put their tops on, and ten, including Mary Lou Schloss, did not. These women were asked to accompany the officers up to the parking area, where police cars were arriving.

At the police cars, as the women were showing identification papers to the officers, Morley Schloss moved into action. He counted those arrested and arranged for someone to take charge of Sarah Wells' dog. "Morley, what about my bicycle?" one woman asked as a policeman held the back door of his car open so that she could get in.

Television cameras had arrived, and, because Morley Schloss seemed to be running things, microphones were thrust in his face. "Ask them," he said, his voice crackling with agitation as he pointed to the arrested women. "Talk to them. It is their bodies that are being repressed." But he couldn't resist answering a reporter who asked him what had happened. "We were having a great time, having a picnic, no one was being disturbed," he

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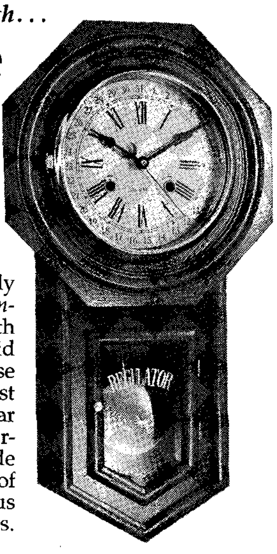

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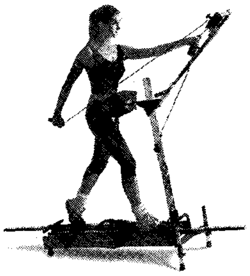

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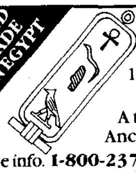

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said. "Then they barged in with police-state tactics."

Tierney O'Brien-Dovan, the nursing mother, was led up from the beach without her shirt. This was her first arrest. She had participated in the Topfree rally in 1986 but had put her shirt on at the last minute, because she had decided that she just couldn't go through with it. This time, she did not put her shirt on. As she and her little girl were escorted into the back of a squad car, she called to Morley, and to anyone else who might be listening, "I am being arrested for nursing my child! Will somebody please go back to the house, call Brad, and tell him his wife, the nursing mother of the universe, is being arrested!"

Three young women who had removed their tops were placed together in the back of one car. The police tried to accommodate them by rolling the windows down partway to give them air. A friend who had not been arrested took pictures of them. They posed behind the bulletproof partition with raised fists, looking militant and streetwise, but then they got bored and started making goofy faces, crossing their eyes for the camera.

Several men who lived near the beach gathered to watch the police action. They wore billowy sports shirts over baggy pants and shook their heads as the Topfree women were led past them. One of them, Joseph Kusovich, said, "I never saw my mother like this. It's for the birds."

A man drinking a can of beer disagreed. "I don't know what it's all about, but I'm cheering for those women," he said.

As the women waited in the police cars, supporters gave them towels to sit on for protection against the hot upholstery, and some of the women who hadn't been arrested tried to start a chorus of the protesters' anthem "Singing for Our Lives," with special words: "We are gentle people, we are singing for our lives; We are topfree people, we are singing for our lives . . ." Their voices sounded frail, and were broken up by a breeze from Lake Ontario and by staccato interruptions from police radios in the cars. The song petered out.

One of the singers went to Morley to ask for more song ideas. He suggested "I'd Rather Be in Rochester Topfree" but couldn't remember the words. Then someone reminded him of the volleyball net and the unattended picnic food down on the sand, and one of the arrested women asked about her car. "Who can drive stick shift?" Morley called back as he disappeared down the embankment to make sure that the beach got cleaned up while his wife and the nine other women were taken to the Public Safety Building and booked for the crime of exposure of a person.

At five o'clock that afternoon, the Topfree Ten were released, pending arraignment in city court. Before the lawbreakers left the Public Safety Building, the police informed the friends who were waiting for them that the women could not be released without proper attire, and so three of the men took off their shirts and gave them to three women who were still barebreasted—thus insuring that it was men, not women, who walked out into the street topfree.

THE fight for the right to be barebreasted on a beach in Rochester has its roots in a movement that began two decades ago, when the belief was widely held among members of the counterculture that being nude was a positive thing. Covering up was considered repressive. (Members of the Topfree Ten dispute application of the term "nudity" to exposure of the breasts, since men without shirts are not legally nude.) People who began championing the idea of clothes-free "body acceptance" had little interest in joining established nudist colonies and segregating themselves from the rest of society in order to play nude volleyball or nude bingo. They simply wanted to be able to take their clothes off and feel free. Many of them had come to a belief in nakedness because nakedness, like vegetarianism and unshaved legs and home-baked bread with oatmeal in it, seemed the natural thing. They had formulated their ideas in a new age that considered being naked a statement of honesty and openness and commendable vulnerability, as in the nude scene in the musical "Hair," and in the photograph of John Lennon and Yoko Ono nude on the cover of their album "Two Virgins." The most natural place to be naked was on the beach, and by the early seventies droves of nude people—few of them true nudists—were sunbathing at such places as Black's Beach, in La Jolla, California; "Hippie Hollow," on Lake Travis, in

Austin, Texas; Sleeping Bear Dunes, in Michigan; Sandy Hook, in New Jersey; and Brush Hollow Beach, in the Cape Cod National Seashore.

In 1974, Brush Hollow Beach grew so crowded with nude sunbathers and people coming to look at them that nearby property owners were distraught: the beach at Brush Hollow had no parking facilities, and the unwelcome visitors' cars crowded the streets of Truro and blocked driveways; foot traffic was eroding the dunes; there was too much litter; some homeowners said that they had been accosted by strangers wanting to use their bathrooms, and when they refused they had been yelled at. In 1975, to remedy the situation, the National Park Service issued a special regulation forbidding nudity in the Cape Cod National Seashore. The announced purpose of the ban was to protect the environment by eliminating what the Truro Neighborhood Association had described as a magnet for too many people. When the regulation went into effect, on May 19th, signs announcing "PUBLIC NUDITY PROHIBITED" were posted.

One of the sunbathers who were upset by the controversial regulation was Lee Baxandall, who had a summer house near Brush Hollow Beach and regularly swam naked there. He had grown up in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and learned the joy of swimming naked as a Boy Scout, skinny-dipping with friends. At college, at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, he had been a member of the editorial board of *Studies on the Left* and had joined the Socialist Club; in the sixties, he had moved to New York and had begun writing for several liberal journals. When the special regulation against nudity went into effect, he found a way to join his politics with his belief in the right to be naked. He was not a nudist, and had no interest in nudism as a secluded, club activity; he was an activist, who wanted to change people's attitudes toward the bare human body and to overturn restrictive laws. He believed that being nude in public was a constitutionally protected right, and that he and other members of an ad-hoc Free the Free Beach group were being discriminated against. Quoting Eugene Callen, who was the leader of Beachfront USA, a Los Angeles group advocating nude beaches, Baxandall's *Green Mountain Quarterly* of June, 1976, published an announcement titled "THE CALL FOR A NUDE BEACH DAY," which said, "We are now entering a new phase in the fight for the liberation of our beaches. . . . No longer will we beg for our rights. We are going to *fight* for them with more demonstrative and more militant activities." Baxandall recalls how easy it was to spread the word in those days, through counterculture publications like *New Times* and the Los Angeles *Free Press*. When Nude Beach Day organizers staged a practice nude-in on the Hudson, on May 31, 1976, in which a dozen nude people spent the afternoon at the sandy fill site for Battery Park City, in lower Manhattan, the demonstration became the cover story of the June-July *Yipster Times*. On the actual Nude Beach Day, two months later (it had to be postponed a week on Cape Cod, because Hurricane Belle was on its way), park rangers patrolled the Cape Cod National Seashore on horseback, free-beach people shed their clothes, and members of the

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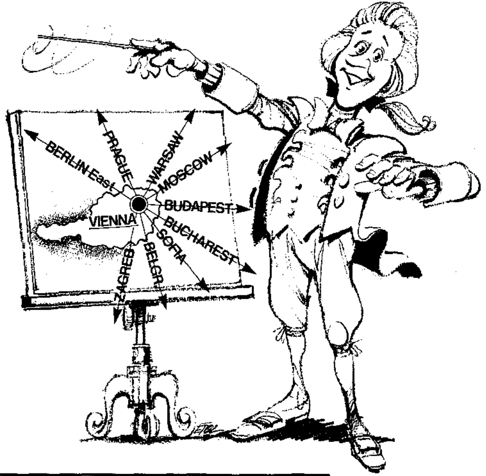

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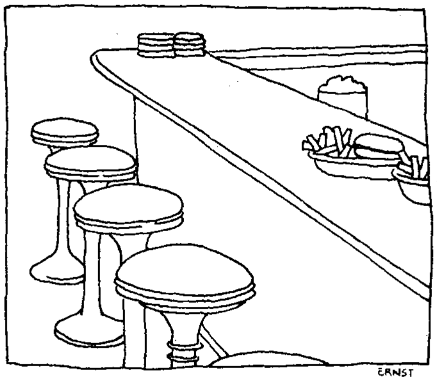
press were ready for a showdown. No one was arrested.

By the time a meeting of some two dozen free-beach activists convened in San Diego, in November of 1977, it was apparent that there were large numbers of people in America who liked being nude outdoors but had little in common with conventional, self-sequestered nudists. Baxandall incorporated the Naturist Society in 1980, in Oshkosh, conceiving of it as similar to the National Geographic Society or the Sierra Club: a privately held national organization based on a common interest—being nude on public lands. Each member received a subscription to *Clothed with the Sun*, "The Quarterly Journal of Clothes-Optional Living," the first issue of which announced a new, radical kind of nudism by proclaiming "Naturists believe that 'Clothes Make the Man'—into a victimized pawn of the state" and "Naturist culture . . . will one day decisively break through the wraps of the decadent clothes-compulsive regime." In differentiating itself from old-fashioned, family nudism, which glorified nuclear families engaged in such innocuous activities as picnics and Ping-Pong, the Naturist Society encouraged the creation of Special Interest Groups, or SIGs, under its auspices. There were the People Recovering from Addictions SIG, the Opera Buffs SIG (they listened to the Met broadcasts while sitting in a hot tub together), the Gay & Lesbian Naturists SIG, and the Single Unattached Naturists SIG. Today, the Naturist Society has fifteen thousand members.

"We like to speak not of nudist colonies but of clothing colonies," Baxandall says. Baxandall is a strapping fifty-five-year-old, with a smooth, nearly hairless body that isn't nearly as tan as you would expect. He is the editor of an anthology called "Radical Perspectives in the Arts" and the author of "World Guide to Nude Beaches and Recreation," and he looks as professorial as a naked man can look, with placid blue eyes that often seem focussed inward behind wire-framed glasses; he has graying, mussed hair, which falls over his forehead in classical Grecian curls, and chin whiskers that form a vague goatee. A slow, confident speaker with a deep voice, he tends to deliver thoughts rather than to converse, and he relishes using logic to explain his commitment to naturism. Unless clothing is used protectively, he says, it is irrational, and therefore wrong, and, worse, it makes people feel that they ought to be ashamed. A doormat outside the headquarters of the Naturist Society, in Oshkosh, reads "PLEASE UNDRESS BEFORE ENTERING."

From its start, as the free-beach movement, the Naturist Society has been outspoken about its goal of making nudity acceptable in public. Naturists tend to be dissenters, and many who formulated their beliefs in the eager days of the Woodstock Nation are willing to break the law in order to change it. They see themselves as an oppressed minority fighting for their rights. A recent issue of Baxandall's magazine, the name of which was changed last summer to *N*(*Nude & Natural*), states, "We have fascists in high places in America. They are well bankrolled, and want to limit our options and our lives. They are testing our will to be a free people in charge of our destinies. We guarantee . . . to Naturist Society members that we will not trim our sails to satisfy this ugly conspiracy." Naturists seem exhilarated even by squabbles among themselves about issues they hold dear. Recently, the naturist press chronicled an extended, furious debate, in the form of letters, articles, and policy statements, between Baxandall and his former live-in companion Nikki Craft, a feminist who held a high position with the Naturist Society. She and some hundred other naturists—male and female—have defected from the movement over the last three years because they believe that nudist and naturist publishers are pandering to male readers by printing cheesecake pictures of nude women in their magazines. (Some of the defectors also contend that nudist and naturist parents have not been forewarned that pictures of nude children among them have found their way into pedophile magazines.)



The Baxandall-Craft schism was an expression of the big issue that divides naturists today. Along with Nikki Craft, some feminists in the movement are angry over what they see as a Naturist Society policy of subordinating concerns about women's rights to the fight for the nude beaches. Like Rochester's Coalition for Topfree Equality, they believe that the "free expression" argument that naturists use to defend nudity avoids the crucial issue of sex discrimination, and in fact *concedes* that women are nude if they are bare-breasted. These women say they are being co-opted when their breasts are used to make a First Amendment case for nudism. They don't deny that nudity is a matter of free expression, but they believe it is more important that the argument be made for a woman's equal protection under the law, as guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. In past years, Michelle Handler, an early organizer of the naturist movement (who has also defected), and some of the other feminists painted slogans on their bare chests during protests, insuring that their action could be seen as free expression (a tactic known to protesters as "nudity with more"). Now they would never use such a strategy, because it obscures what has always been the big issue for them: women's rights. The feminists also say that the First Amendment argument increases the power of pornographers to exploit nudity.

When these combative naturists started organizing, in the seventies, many old-fashioned nudists were dismayed. They had always made an effort to behave like nice, peaceful people and to present nudism as a wholesome family activity. They had made a point of avoiding politics and of emphasizing that they did not want to impose their way of life on other people, or even to expose their way of life to other people; they were just ordinary citizens who lived ordinary lives, but without clothes, in the privacy of a nudist park or their homes. Nudist-park proprietors were especially worried about the naturists, who became known among the nudists as "the beach people." The park owners were afraid that if the beach people got their way, and sunbathers were able to go to a free public

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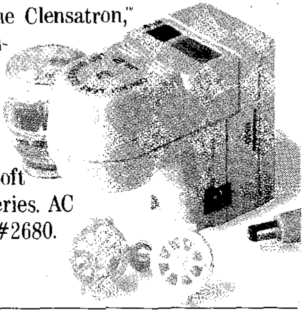

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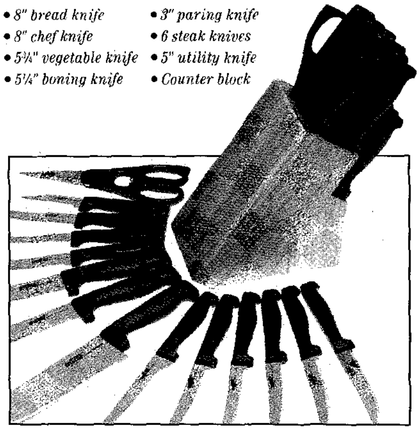

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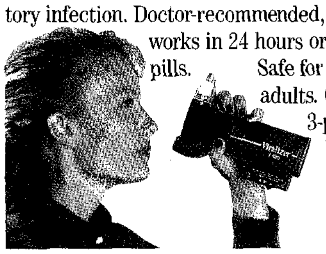

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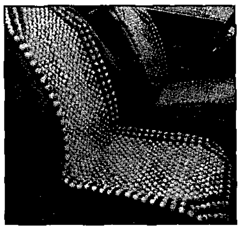

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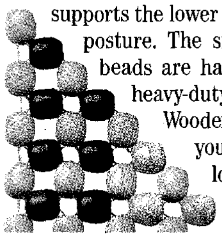

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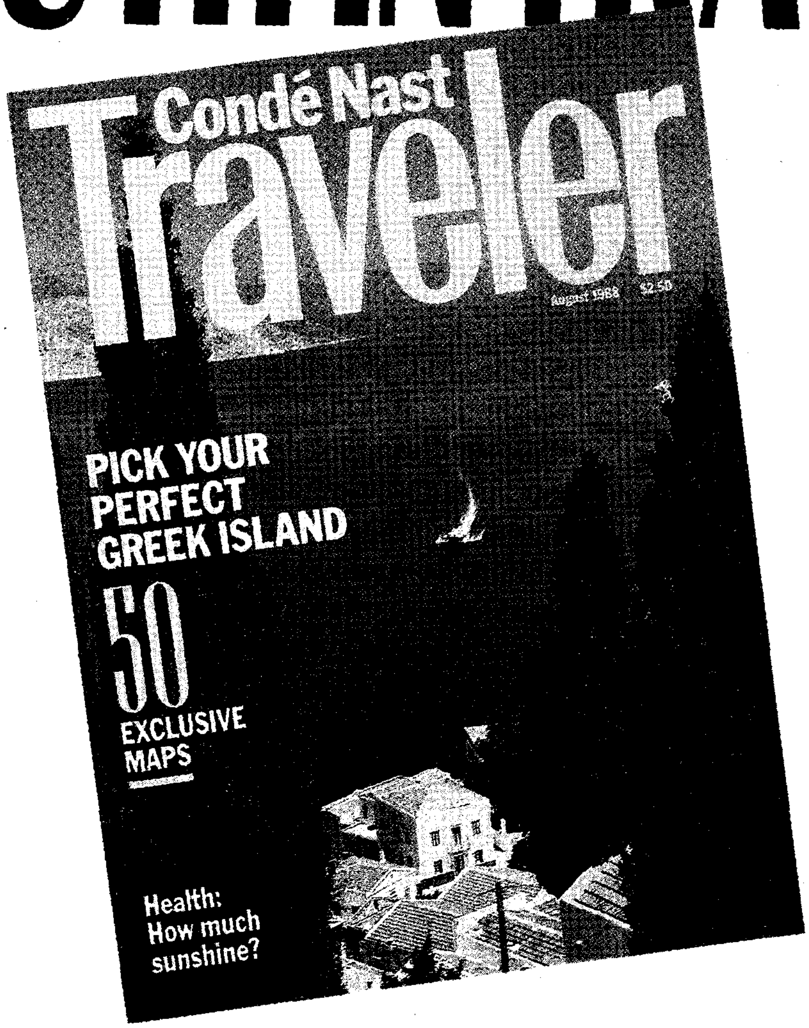

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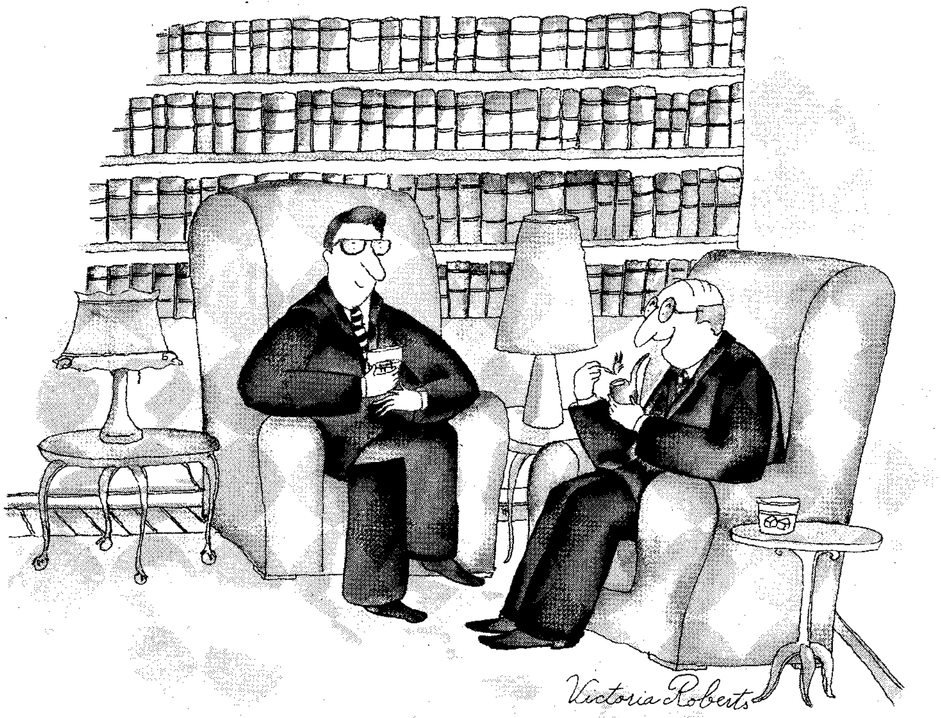
beach without clothes, nudist parks, which charge admission, would be out of business.

THE world's first nudist park was opened on the sea, near Lübeck, in 1903, by a twenty-five-year-old German named Paul Zimmermann. It was called Freilichtpark (Free Light Park), and it drew up a code of strict rules, by which some old-fashioned nudist camps still abide: daily morning calisthenics, a meatless diet, and Spartan living quarters or outdoor camping. Many people in the naturist movement today describe being naked as part of a healthy regimen that includes exercise, vegetarianism, and open-air living, but most are not nearly as strict as their spiritual ancestors at Freilichtpark. Zimmermann ran Freilichtpark for half a century, and his daughter kept it open until 1981—a beacon for nudists around the world who believed that a clothes-free life was therapeutic. But the idea of nakedness as good medicine did not begin with Freilichtpark. Hippocrates prescribed sunbaths and wrote that running naked helped cleanse the skin, and many of the original Olympians competed in the nude (the root *gymno-* means "naked"). Following the Greeks' belief in heliotherapy, exposure to the sun has almost always been considered healthy, from the Romans' solaria to daily naked "air baths" taken by Benjamin Franklin and Henry David Thoreau; and in the late eighteen-hundreds, when it had been proved that sunlight kills bacteria, doctors were recommending sunbathing to treat lupus, tuberculosis, rickets, weight loss, scrofula, high blood pressure, lung congestion, scurvy, mental exhaustion, depression, anemia, insomnia, sexual dysfunction, and acne.

Freilichtpark was founded at a time when several theorists in Germany had begun to laud nakedness not only for personal fitness but also as an antidote to the sooty Industrial Revolution, and as a cure for social neurosis. Like many naturists today, some early advocates of organized nudism connected it with radical social programs. The movement's first theoretician was Richard Ungewitter, of Germany, who in 1905 wrote a small illustrated book called "Die Nacktheit" ("Nakedness"), in which he proposed a utopian society whose members ate no meat, didn't smoke tobacco or drink liquor, and went naked. The book sold ninety thousand copies, and in 1906 Ungewitter founded the Alliance for a Better Life, a nudist society restricted to blond, blue-eyed, Aryan vegetarians.

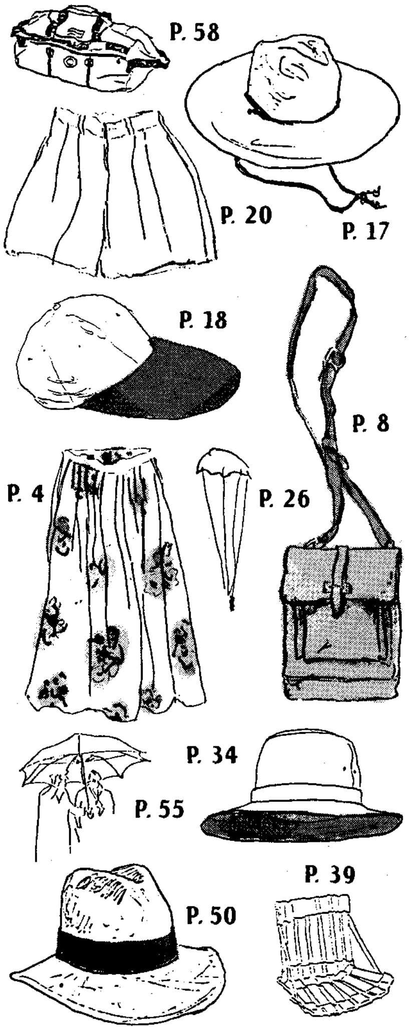


"I'm leaving my subconscious to science."

• •

As Nacktkultur attracted more followers, so did the German youth movement. The Wandervogel, founded in Berlin by Hermann Hoffmann in 1890, preached the restorative benefits of natural outdoor living: frolicking in fields and bathing in streams—done to best advantage in the nude. To romanticize the movement and distance it from old-fashioned social conventions, Hoffmann replaced formal Prussian heel clicks with a greeting borrowed from antiquity—a raised-right-arm salute—accompanied by the word "Heil!" During the severe economic decline that followed Germany's defeat in the First World War, the Wandervogel prospered: its professedly "natural" and "classical" tenets appealed strongly to people for whom the modern world was so humbling. Why yearn for rich food on the table in an overheated home when the real path to good health was eating root vegetables and sleeping on a bed of straw under the stars? The American writer Jan Gay went to Germany, and, in her 1932 book about world nudism, "On Going Naked," reported, "Young men who have either absolutely no money or a small dole of a dollar or two a week go out to the nudist parks, sleep in tents or in small cabins which they build, prepare their food of vegetables and milk and bread, spend their days healthfully out of doors."

Nudism's early emphasis on health and cleanliness was no affectation; to advocate nude communal swimming was to champion the rights of the poor, known as "the great unwashed," for public nudity provided them a rare chance to get clean. Even in New York City, from the eighteen-seventies until the Second World War men with no other place to bathe had an opportunity to swim nude together (on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, and half a day on Sundays) within the confines of big pine-board enclosures floated in the Hudson River. In Germany, the most influential nudist leader in the twenties was a Socialist gymnastics teacher in Berlin named Adolf Koch; his Friday-evening health-exercise classes included hot-water showers with plenty of soap—for some pupils, their only opportunity to wash. To Koch, nudity was not only the restorative that sickly,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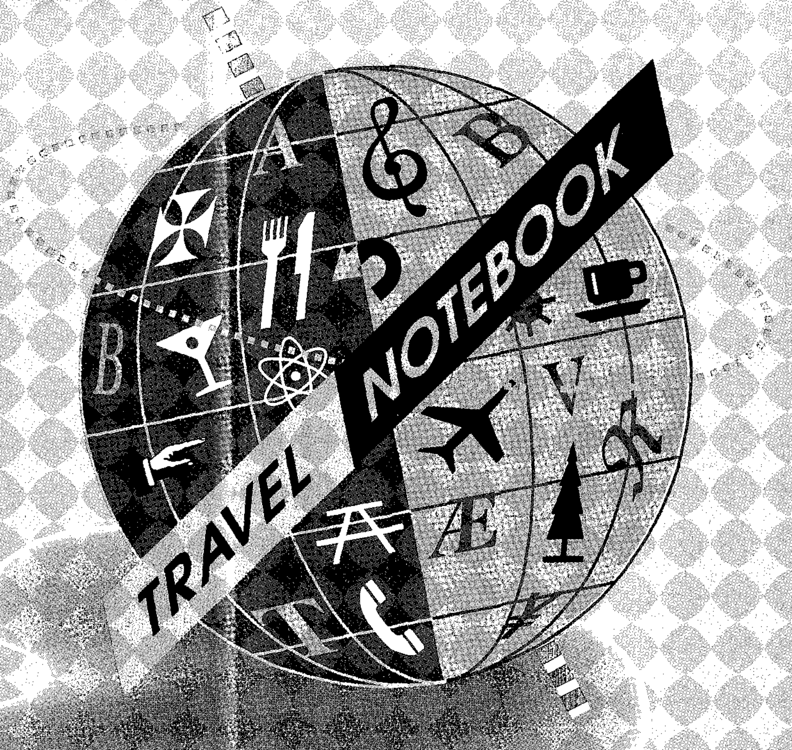
sun-deprived German children needed but also a sure basis for creating a society based on equality rather than privilege. Koch's argument is one that was heard echoed among the modern nudists on the beach at Rochester: that clothes are a way of enforcing social stratification; making women wear a top, for instance, is a symbolic way of keeping their status lower than men's. Going back to the natural state of nakedness insures that you will neither gain any privilege or pay any penalty because of your status or your sexual identity: you are who you are, and women are as unencumbered as men. Among nudists, there is no certain way to differentiate between a vagabond and a bank president.

At the Koch school in Berlin, nude group exercises were choreographed as great oscillating patterns of human flesh, with the same precision that would be seen a few years later in the close-order drill of Leni Riefenstahl's film "Triumph of the Will" and Busby Berkeley musicals. Koch's calisthenics, performed to the cadence of a drum or a piano, created undulating tableaux of vaulting fauns chasing rabbits through the woods, or of warriors on the march. "This curious combination—a fat man with a soft white body leading a group of men and women whose brown bodies move subtly and rhythmically—becomes a spectacle of beauty," Jan Gay wrote, after watching Koch. At a Congress of Nudity and Education—it was held in Berlin in 1929 and was attended by three thousand people from Europe and the Americas—Koch staged a nude gymnastics-and-dance exhibition by faculty members and students. He estimated that sixty thousand Socialist nudists followed his teachings, and a Berlin newspaper put the total number of Nacktkultur adherents in Germany at three million.

A New York couple, Frances and Mason Merrill, probably did more than anyone else to introduce nudism to America, with their book, published in 1931, called "Among the Nudists." Liberally illustrated with poetic photographs of bare bodies swaying and swirling expressively in idyllic landscapes and also with pictures of athletic games, happy children, and outdoor figure painting, "Among the Nudists" is a disarming vision of innocents in a faraway land. In their foreword, the Merrills describe themselves as "a light-starved young couple" living in a Manhattan apartment who wanted a vacation "farthest removed from railroads and motor highways, from the city evils that are at their worst in New York, the apotheosis of cities." They found their paradise at Freilichtpark, where the nudism they experienced was healthy and harmless, without political implications.

The Merrills begin squeamishly. The first chapter of their book is called "Nacktkultur Assails Us." They venture forth among the nudists, into the woods, and encounter a big, beer-bellied, shaven-headed nude man, Herr Krieger, doing his *Gymnastik*, then come upon two nude maidens practicing a rhythmic dance, as one of them, Fräulein Voight, beats a tomtom. The encounters are excruciating: "We knew neither what to say nor where to look." Their first night, they both have bad dreams: they are nude in their offices in New York; they are stoned and chased through the city's streets. Soon, however, the Merrills shed their clothes, and then their fear and embarrassment, as they learn to play *Schwingball* and Hunter-and-Hare (the latter game a favorite, because it calls for much running and jumping in the sun and open air as "hunters" throw a volleyball at "hares" in the center of a circle). They learn the "exquisite smoothness" of swimming without a suit. They meet grandmothers and grandfathers who look twenty-five years old and play like girls and boys. They sleep in a rustic cabin, waking to "the swelling symphony of birds." They perform gymnastics, losing all self-consciousness: "What did it matter that most of us were absurd caricatures of Bacchantes? Springing high into the sunshine, the cool breeze on our bodies, we were exultant creatures, free in free nature, for a few moments laughing pagan nymphs and fauns." By the time the Merrills leave Freilichtpark, having stayed a month instead of the week they had anticipated, they have become ardent champions of nudism: "The last landmarks of our Eden dropped out of sight, and we were once more prisoners of civilization."

AMERICAN nudism can be said to have begun on December 5, 1929, when a fifty-year-old contractor and builder named Kurt Barthel—who had become acquainted with Nacktkul-



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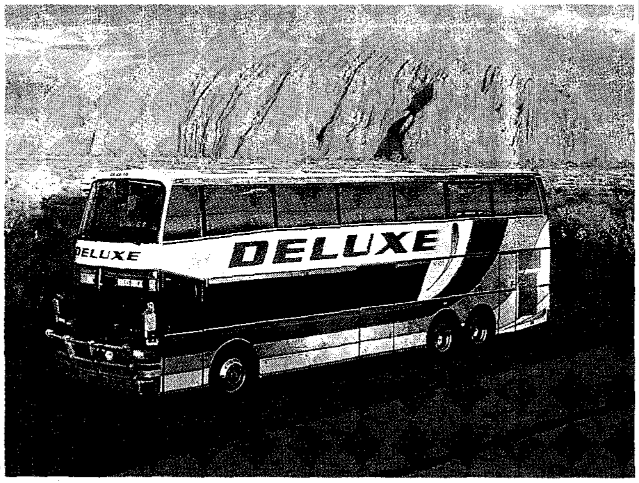

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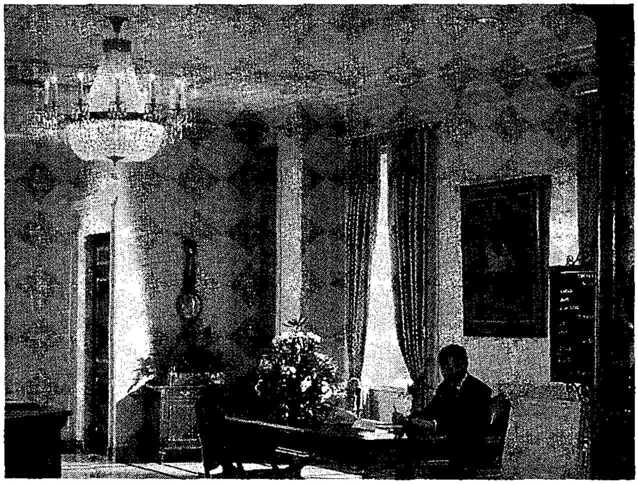

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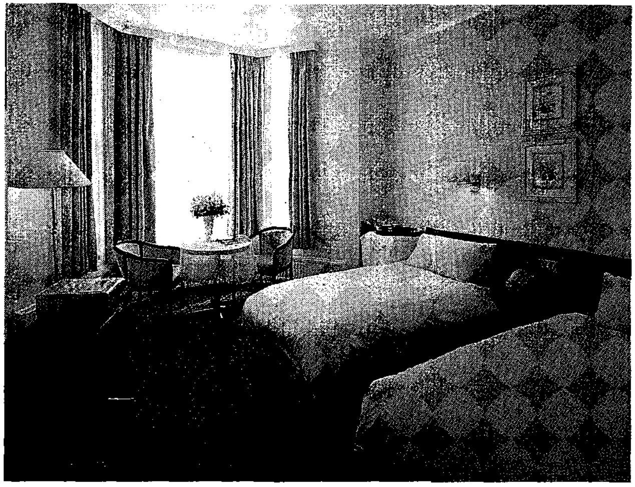

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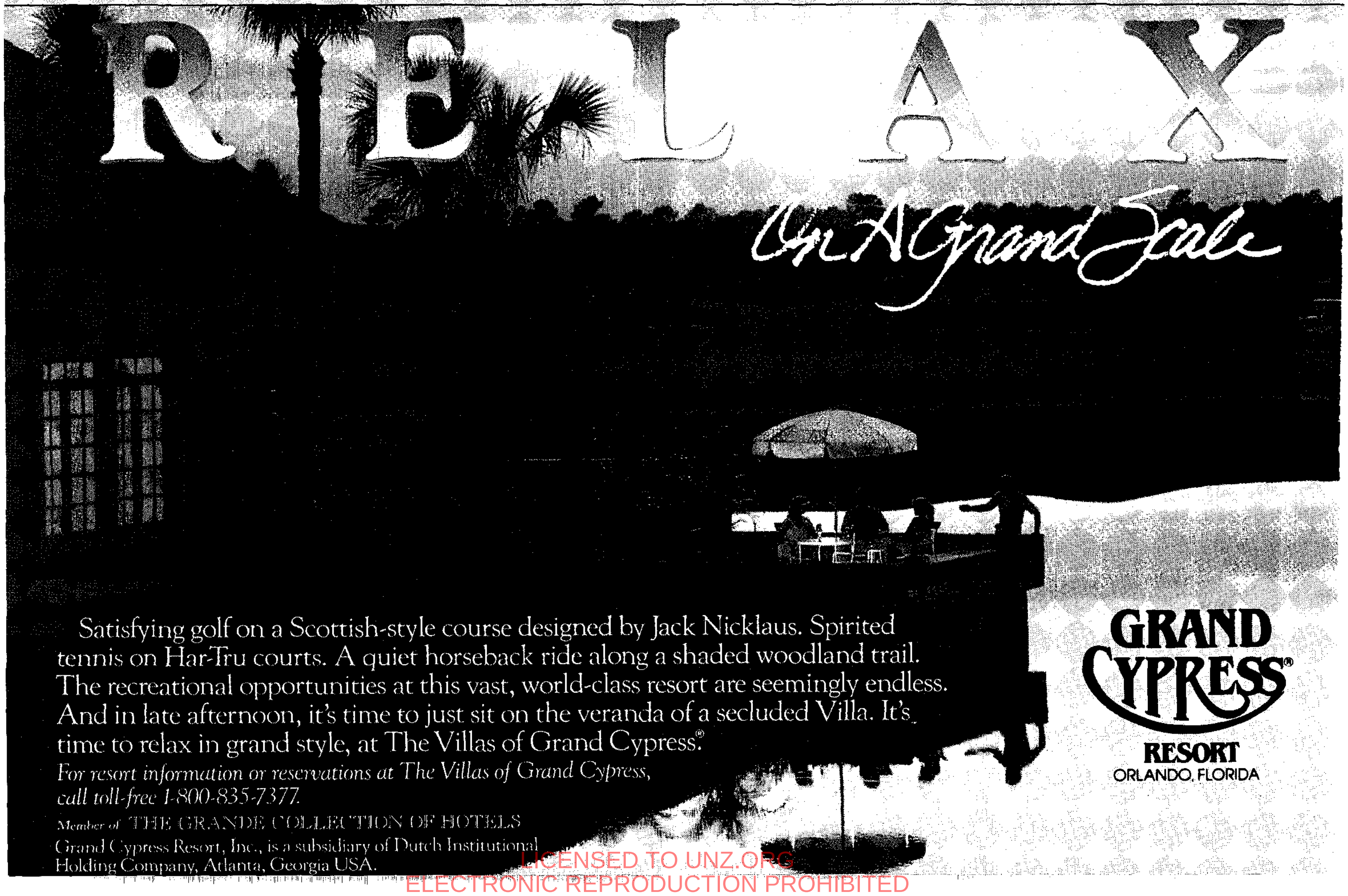

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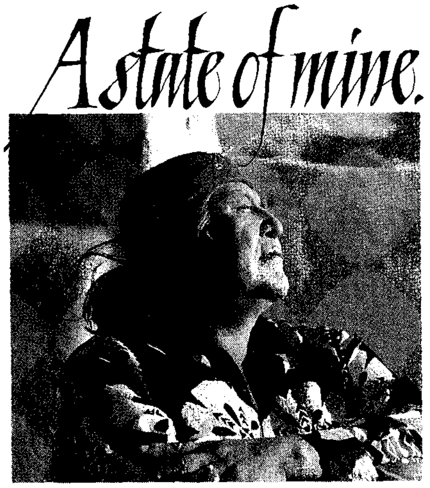
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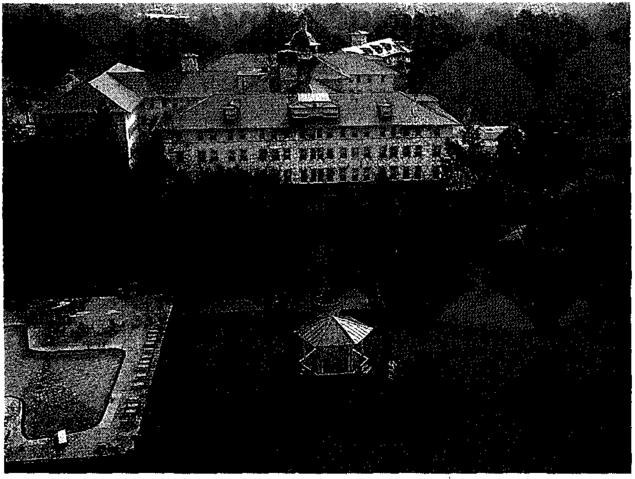

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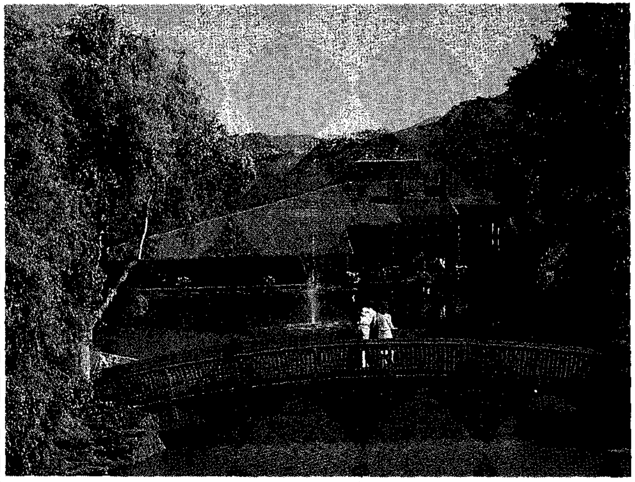

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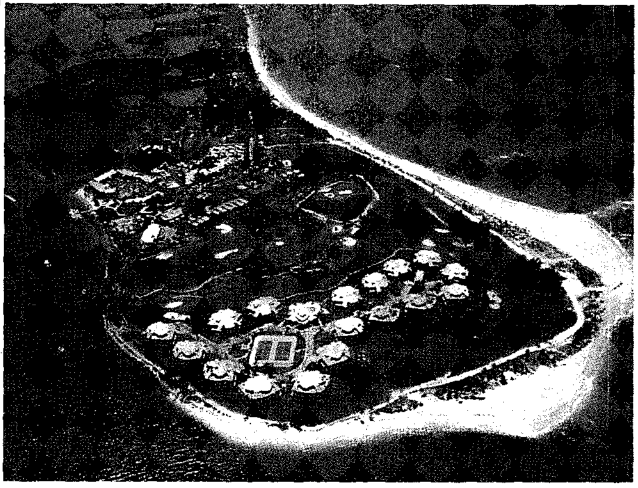

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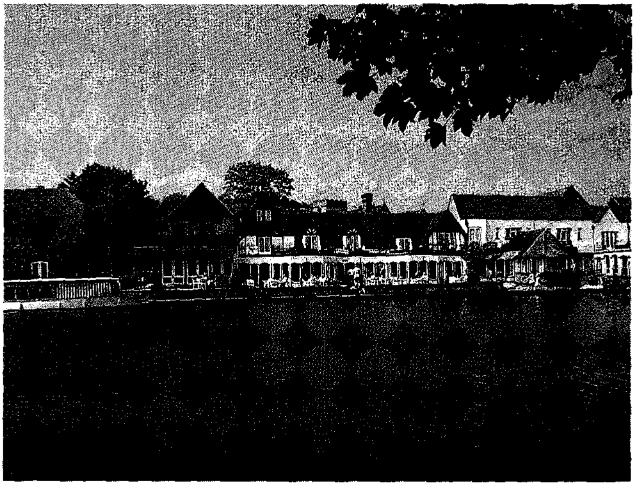

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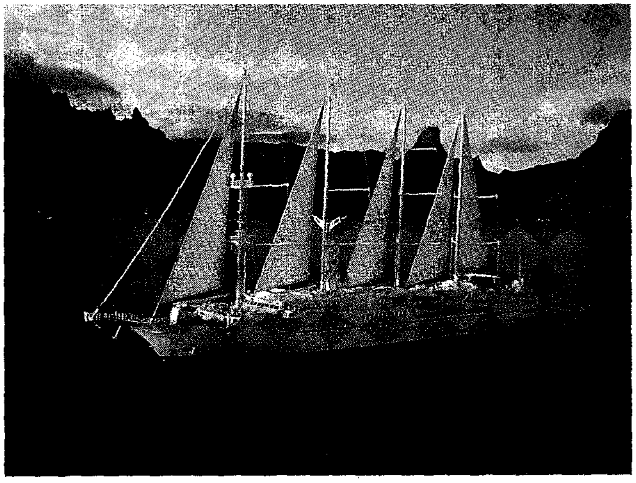

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tur in Germany, and who had recently emigrated to New York, and had organized a nude outing near Peekskill, New York, on Labor Day—met for dinner with two friends, Aloysius Patrick Flynn and Victor Curci, in Manhattan. The men discussed whether the tenets of nudism could be imported to America, and by the end of the meal they had agreed that the time was right to begin an American League for Physical Culture. Eight men and four women attended the first meeting, a few days later, in a gym on upper Broadway, and soon the group rented grounds for a nudist camp the following summer near Spring Valley, New York. The league's by-laws described its goals: "The cultivation of physical, moral, and social health through exercise and life under natural conditions, shared in by both sexes and all ages, and the education of the public in regard to our methods and ideals."

One evening in December of 1931, police detectives, acting on a complaint that a gymnasium on Seventh Avenue was the site of nudist activities, smashed their way in, found a meeting of the league in progress, and arrested twenty-four nudists, including seven women, on charges of lewd exposure. A week later, Magistrate Jonah Goldstein ruled that their exposure had not been lewd, and let them go free. "I don't want it to be in any manner understood that I approve of any form of nudity in the gymnasium or elsewhere," Magistrate Goldstein noted, but he also acknowledged that standards were changing. "What is perfectly all right on the bathing beaches today caused an arrest three years ago," he said, referring to the same incident that Morley Schloss often mentions, in which eighteen men were fined a dollar apiece in 1929 for exposing their chests on the beach at Coney Island.

Magistrate Goldstein's ruling was a great moment for nudism, giving the American League for Physical Culture nationwide publicity as well as tacit legal approval, in New York, at least. Five months later, Barthel led its members out to inspect a thirty-four-acre parcel of land he planned to buy in Millington, New Jersey. They approved, and it became Sky Farm, the first nudist club in America to have its own permanent grounds. Barthel envisioned it as "a model farm for a national organization," writing, in 1933, "We may very well hope that in another three years nudism will have spread from Maine to California." By 1936, there were eighty-one nudist clubs across the country, many of them abiding by Edenic rules that forbade liquor and discussions of religion or politics.

In the early days, nudist news and lists of nudist clubs were broadcast by a monthly magazine called *The Nudist*, which first appeared in May of 1933. *The Nudist* featured a cover logo of the goddess Diana dashing through a field with a greyhound running by her side. Its motto was "Living the Good Life Wherein Honesty Is Most Beautiful." *The Nudist* printed photographs of sunbathers with genitalia erased and retouched to appear as smooth and featureless as the groin of a Ken or Barbie doll. Even so, these pictures were daring by contemporary standards. Many of them differed from art photographs of nudes in that they were candid: often they were of clearly ordinary people doing real things, not artists' models posing. Furthermore, they showed men, women, and children together.

The publisher of *The Nudist*, a retired Baptist preacher named Ilsley Boone, who liked to be called Uncle Danny, had founded the International Nudist Conference in 1933, after brief service as vice-president of Barthel's American League for Physical Culture. Boone opened his own nudist camp, Sunshine Park, at Mays Landing, in New Jersey, and soon became the dominant advocate of clothing-free living in America. Boone's eclipse of Barthel was a matter of temperament and tactics, expressed in a transformation of many American nudist colonies from rigorous enforcers of the strict Freilichtpark regime of exercise and diet to pleasant rustic campsites that gave members the opportunity to engage in their favorite leisure-time activities in the nude. Boone did not subscribe to the idea of compulsory morning calisthenics or meatless meals. Nor did he believe that the nudist movement should proceed with caution in recruiting converts. Where Barthel advocated unobtrusive behavior, Boone was evangelistic. He proclaimed Sunshine Park the "national nudist rendezvous" and made a hundred acres of

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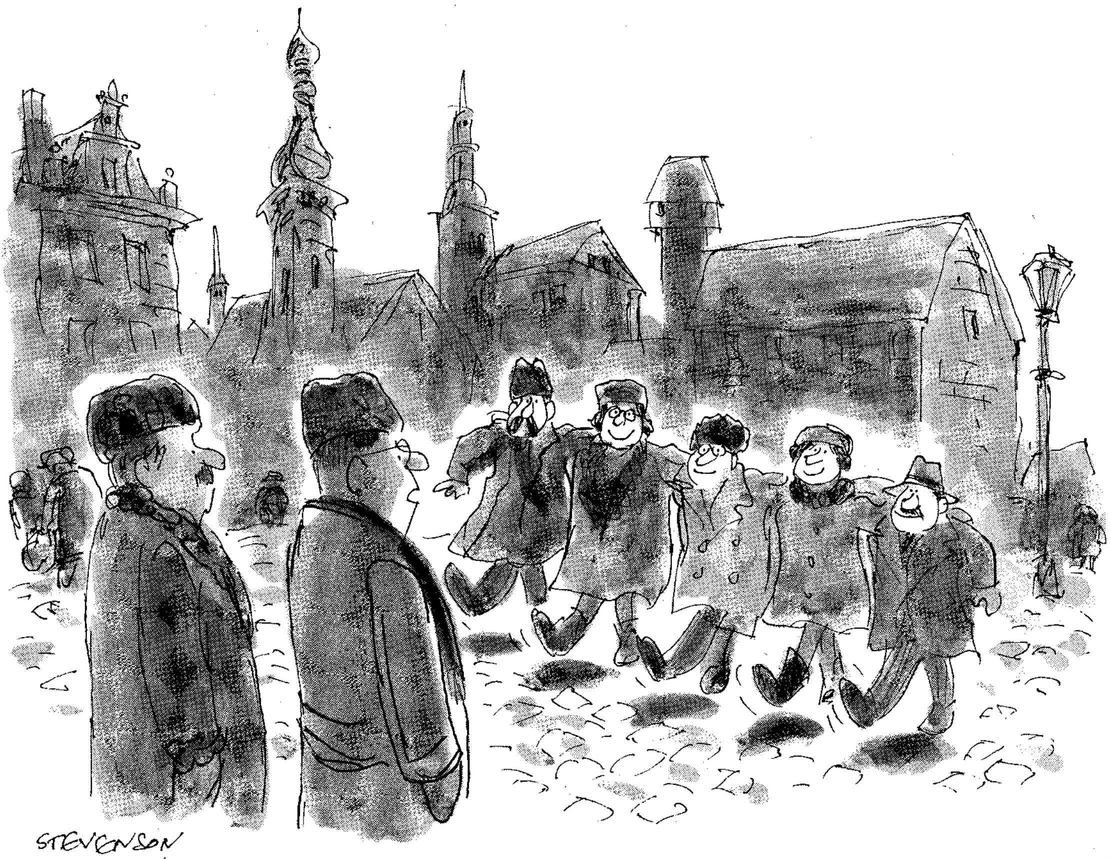

"The changes are coming much too fast—I never dreamed I'd see the hully gully in Estonia."

• •

building lots available for sale to nude settlers along the Great Egg Harbor River, which was known to contain tannic acid—erroneously thought to soothe sunburns.

Unlike the modern nudist war, fought over the right to be bare-breasted or naked on a beach, most of Uncle Danny's battles were with the postal service, which had been empowered by the Comstock Law of 1873 to monitor mailed obscenity. He engaged in countless court actions over the pictures in his magazine, and for two months in 1947 he published two versions: one, for the United States mail, in which genitals in all pictures were erased, and an unretouched version for newsstands. He also appeared in court dozens of times to fight local anti-obscenity laws. His court record was about fifty-fifty: he usually won in jury trials and lost when a judge decided. For years, the magazine helped give Boone a near-monopoly on American nudism; it was virtually nudists' only source of information about clubs around the country, and it was profitable, because all its photographs and articles were donated by nudist clubs who needed it to let nudists know they existed. In the late nineteen-thirties, Boone changed the name of *The Nudist* to *Sunshine & Health* and abandoned the name "International Nudist Conference" in favor of "American Sunbathing Association." He explained that the terms "nudist" and "nudism" had been "seized upon by burlesque-theatre managers, night-club troupes, disorderly roadhouses, and exposition sideshows to further their own business enterprise in the field of commercialized pornography." The strategy of modern naturism is just the opposite. Rather than try to disguise interest in nudity, Lee Baxandall, when he changed the name of the Naturist Society magazine from *Clothed with the Sun* to *Nude & Natural*, wrote that one reason was to celebrate "the N word" and return it to respectability.

Uncle Danny Boone ruled the American Sunbathing Association until 1951, a year that was marked by an event known to nudists as "the Revolution." The association's board of directors, consisting of men loyal to Boone, had regularly flouted democratic procedures at annual national conventions. Despite Uncle Danny's reports of increases in membership and dues, the A.S.A. seemed to be always on the brink of financial ruin. After the Second World War (during which national meetings were suspended), grass-roots groups of nudists tried to audit the A.S.A.'s books; when Boone blocked them, they began an attempt to unseat him. The coup included secret meetings, letter-writing campaigns, and, finally, a New Jersey court battle, which resulted in the A.S.A. bylaws' being declared invalid. At the A.S.A. convention in August of 1951, Boone and his followers were expelled. Boone subsequently established his own National Nudist Council, but the A.S.A., which he had developed from a small cult into a nationwide social organization, remained the prevailing voice of American nudism.

At the time of Uncle Danny's defeat, nudism was still a mostly clandestine practice. In 1935, Governor Herbert Lehman, of New York, had signed a law, originally sponsored by the Catholic Legion of Decency, that prohibited nudist clubs from doing business, and the law stood until 1957. Nudist clubs were illegal in Ohio, Michigan, and Los Angeles as well (though nudism was acceptable there as long as the sexes were segregated), and were allowed in Kentucky only if all activities took place behind a twenty-foot-high brick wall. Newcomers to the movement sometimes approached it with caution: "I must admit I wondered a bit about the sort of people I was going to meet, half-expecting some 'peculiar' bohemians out of the pages of a Greenwich Village novel," a woman named Pamela Johnson wrote in an article called "A Letter to Wives from a Nudist Spouse," in a 1951 issue of the short-lived magazine *Suntan*. Mrs. Johnson assured skeptics that she had "eyed the Marys and Hanks and Joes we met with the gravest suspicion" until she came to know her fellow-nudists as Mary the kindergarten teacher, Hank the optometrist, and Joe the patent attorney. She concluded her letter by advising wives to experience nudism first in their own home: "Try sleeping nude, if you don't already—once you get used to it you won't want to sleep any other way. . . . If you've been egged on to some slimming exercises by the fashion columns or helpful friends, try them without clothes, it feels wonderful. You can really get a swing into them. Of course if all this is 'old hat' to you, you are half nudist already."

Mrs. Johnson's "Letter to Wives" was signed "Pam," in accord with a policy, common among early nudists, of using only first names or, in some cases, pseudonyms, to protect their reputation in clothed society. And her husband, "Donald Johnson," was really John Ball, the author of the novel "In the Heat of the Night," featuring the black detective Virgil Tibbs, and also of "The Cool Cottontail," a Tibbs murder mystery set in a nudist resort. In another book, "Nudist Society" (co-written under his pseudonym with William E. Hartman and Marilyn Fithian), Ball told of a corporation president "stifled in protocol during the business week" who looked forward to nudist weekends so he could be just Jim again. That kind of surreptitious nudism is anathema to naturists, who espouse nudity because it is more honest than hiding underneath clothes, and it was one reason that so many of them originally felt they had nothing in common with the secretive organized nudist movement. Today, however, most nudists aren't so stealthy; many have joined the naturists in publicly fighting for clothes-free rights.

The American Sunbathing Association estimates that four out of five newcomers first learned about nudism by reading nudist magazines; yet it was not until January of 1958, when the Supreme Court unanimously struck down a Post Office ban on the mailing of nudist magazines, that they were finally deemed decent enough to send through the mail. In reversing the ban, the court cited the previous summer's decision, written by Justice William Brennan in the case of Roth v. U.S., which established a narrow definition of the term "obscenity" as something that appeals on the whole to "prurient interests." Ironically, that decision, for which the A.S.A. had fought for a quarter of a century, meant big trouble for nudism. For many years, *Sunshine & Health* and a successor, *American Sunbather*, were among the few relatively accessible magazines that featured total (if genital-less) nudity. After Roth v. U.S., newsstands filled up with girlie magazines, many of them spuriously billed as nudist, and also with real nudist magazines featuring dirty pictures. To exacerbate the situation further, the publication of *Nudism Today*—the A.S.A.'s official magazine—was contracted out in 1964 to a publisher with no apparent qualms about using sex appeal to sell it. The first issue showed on the cover a nude woman with exposed breasts and with a coy banner headline, "NUDIST HARVEST," covering her private parts. A.S.A. members began to complain when magazines purporting to depict their salutary lives published pictures emphasizing women's breasts and genitals and people engaged in passionate behavior of a kind that would never be tolerated in public at a nudist club. In 1970, the A.S.A. forbade *Nudism Today* to use its logo, and pulled out of the glossy-magazines field altogether—a policy that still stands.

The tangle of sex and nudity disheartened many people in the nudist movement, who had worked hard to present a sexless image of nudist life. Once standards of obscenity were relaxed, they found their high-minded world misconstrued and exploited more flagrantly than ever. In October of 1967, *Playboy* gleefully announced, "The Free Beach Movement is healthy and thriving, with new areas for nudeniks opening all along the sunny West Coast," and above this caption was a picture of a "paisley paint-in" on the buttocks of a nude blonde at a San Francisco party. The most grievous example of nudism's decline was the transformation of Zoro Nature Park, in Roselawn, Indiana, which had been founded in the thirties, by a Chicago lawyer named Alois S. Knapp, on the Old World philosophical principles of Freilichtpark. By the mid-seventies, it had changed its name to Naked City, and a new proprietor, Dick Drost, had

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made it the home of the Miss Nude Teeny Bopper Contest and what was billed as America's Only Nude Truck Stop.

Another problem facing organized nudism was the decay of some of the camps. Going back to nature was an attractive idea, but not if it meant living in a residential nudist park of dilapidated mobile homes or spending a weekend in tumbledown cabins with displeasing outdoor plumbing. A poll conducted by the authors of "Nudist Society" on "Specific Things Nudists Dislike About Social Nudism" listed "poor facilities" second only to "public nonacceptance." No one described this aspect of nudism more pointedly than Diane Arbus, in her photographs of nudists and in an article she wrote in 1965 after taking pictures at a camp called Sunrise Haven: "There is an empty pop bottle or a rusty bobby pin underfoot, the lake bottom oozes mud in a particularly nasty way. . . the outhouse smells, the woods look mangy. It is as if way back in the Garden of Eden, after the Fall, Adam and Eve had begged the Lord to forgive them; and God, in His boundless exasperation, had said, 'All right, then. *STAY*. Stay in the Garden. Get civilized. Procreate. Muck it up.' And they did."

TODAY, nudists and naturists play down their differences, which are as much a matter of dress code as of public policy. A.S.A. (nudist) events sometimes require that participants be entirely nude, weather permitting. Naturists believe that clothing should be optional; they advocate leaving the choice to the individual in all situations. Naturists—and most nudists as well—dislike the term "nudist colony," because it suggests images of lepers or other pariahs; naturists don't even like the concept of a nudist camp, because it sets the unclothed outside the mainstream of society. Since the formation of the Naturist Society, however, the two groups have tried to work together in the fight against what one naturist has described as "the tyranny of the textile world."

Morley and Mary Lou Schloss, like many of their friends, belong to the Naturist Society and also to an American Sunbathing Association nudist club. The Schlosses work ceaselessly to change laws and people's attitudes, and it doesn't matter to them whether they do it as nudists or as naturists. They spend a good part of their time attending regional and national meetings of pro-nudity organizations of either variety. A week before the Topfree Equality Picnic in Rochester, they had taken their family to a Naturist Eastern Gathering in the Poconos, co-sponsored by the Naturist Society and the A.S.A.-affiliated Tri-State Sun Club, where, along with nearly seven hundred other nudists and naturists, they spent hours debating tactics, attending legal workshops, and planning public-relations strategies they could use to make the world a nuder place. The agenda for the gathering listed such diversions as a campfire singalong and kite flying, and also colloquiums, on subjects that ranged from "Where Can We Go Nude?" (at which convention delegates presented newly discovered nude beaches and campgrounds) to "Naturism and the Disabled." There were strategy meetings of the Naturist/Nudist Leadership Conference; and seminars in humanism and naturism.

Like many people active in the modern clothes-free movement, Morley and Mary Lou have a lot on their minds these days: call it nudism or naturism, the naked life they want to lead is beset by troubles, many of them of recent origin. In the last few years, fundamentalist religious groups have successfully lobbied to enact laws closing beaches that had been used by nude swimmers for decades; the federal Fish and Wildlife Service is concerned that nudists and a small endangered bird called the piping plover are similarly attracted to remote beaches, for the piping plover cannot easily reproduce if people are around; and in many cases, such as that of the original Rochester Topfree Seven, naturists have found themselves in legal limbo—repressed by local laws but unable to get a case into a federal court, where they could argue for nudity as a right guaranteed by the Constitution. The Schlosses love to grapple with such issues; but some others at the Naturist Eastern Gathering lamented how little time there was anymore for sunning and skinny-dipping, what with all the political seminars and educational briefings they felt they ought to attend.

The site of the gathering was not a full-time nudist park. It was a children's summer camp that had been spruced up in anticipation of the arrival of campers at the end of the month and rented for four days by the naturists. Surrounded by acres of lush Pennsylvania woods, and with facilities including volleyball courts, a lake, and a heated swimming pool, the place was perfect for being naked in, except that the camp had very few lawn chairs for sunbathing.

Nudists generally try to be as bare as circumstances allow, but a lot of people at this convention clearly loved wearing T-shirts, and not just to keep warm. It was a fashion that appeared unusual at first to non-nudist eyes but soon seemed routine: naked from the waist down to the tops of socks. A woman in a shirt that said "HAPPINESS IS NO TAN LINES" described herself as simply practical when it came to clothes: she didn't hate clothing; she just didn't like wearing it when the sun was shining. The good thing about putting on a T-shirt, apparently, is that it gives a nudist the opportunity, otherwise unavailable, to use clothing expressively. Everyone at the camp was passionate about the clothing-free life, so, paradoxically, wearing T-shirts in favor of nakedness was very popular. Slogans included "PARTY NAKED," "I AM NOT ASHAMED," and the Schlosses' "I'D RATHER BE IN ROCHESTER TOPFREE. The special souvenir of the weekend was a bright-red T-shirt with a cartoon of a naked man and a naked woman on it and the words "NATURIST EASTERN GATHERING, 1989."

It was strange to be surrounded by so many nude or nearly nude human beings in a woodland setting: they seemed like a wandering herd of docile, nearly hairless animals. Few people were entirely naked. In addition to T-shirts, some wore sun visors, and nearly all had on footwear: running shoes, sandals and socks, even a few incongruous high heels. Women carried purses, and many men wore small plastic tubes called Stash-Its on strings around their necks or zippered terry-cloth wrist wallets for car keys and meal tickets. One of the minor difficulties of being a nudist is having no pockets.

Although many nudists come to a convention such as this raring to attend workshops and policy meetings, there are still plenty of fun-loving ones, who come to do the things they would do at any campground but do them in the nude. Even Morley Schloss took time out from more serious business to lead a

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session of kids' water games Friday afternoon. Among the encamped vans and motor homes, naked husbands cooked hot dogs on charcoal grills for their naked families, naked women sat on lawn chairs reading Danielle Steel novels, naked teen-agers oblivious of the world listened to Walkman earphones throbbing on their heads, and lines of naked people waited to use the Porta-Johns. The utterly mundane impression given by all this activity was sustained by the ardent boosterism many of the campers had toward their way of life, enthusing about it with the same kind of fervor that another family might show for a hobby like bowling. Several hobbyists had brought portable computers and used them to take notes or to connect with the Online Naturist Club, an electronic bulletin board with which people use modem-equipped computers to exchange views and news about clothing-optional beaches. "If you are going to guess a naturist's profession, guess computer programmer," said Michael Gesner, the president of the Tri-State Sun Club. He estimated that nearly half the people attending the gathering were computer professionals. "If not that, guess nurse or teacher," he went on. "Most of our people are more educated than average—whatever 'average' means."

As at conventions everywhere, there were souvenirs for sale. Sun visors, tote bags, and bumper stickers expressing a passion for the bare life were available, and so were dozens of products that nude people want or need, such as a computerized self-portrait on a T-shirt and a portable pillow called Tushy Cushy. Everything was peddled at card tables in a small bazaar near the registration desk and along a nearby path. Space in the bazaar was free to anyone with something to sell; venders were asked to bring their own tables and to consider contributing to the legal fund of the New England Naturist Association. At one table, an Avon lady was extolling the wonders of Skin-So-Soft, a bath oil that has a reputation for an unusual side effect—repelling insects. She added that it also did a great job of cleaning vinyl car upholstery.

No Nudelywed Game was played at this year's gathering. Patterned after "The Newlywed Game," a television quiz show on which newly married couples try to win prizes by answering sometimes risqué questions, last year's Nudelywed Game had been criticized in print, by a naturist named Nina Silver, because husbands were asked to compare their wife's breasts to a fruit or a vegetable, and sexual intercourse (as on "The Newlywed Game") was referred to as "making whoopie." Silver also noted with disapproval that homosexual couples were excluded from the game, although naturist policy forbids discrimination against gays. Another event missing from this year's activities was a nude version of television's "Gong Show": Last year, the most popular contestants, Sue and Fritz Terppe, appeared as "the Unknown Whistlers," wearing paper bags over their heads, a shirt and a skirt from the hips down, and body paint on their torsos that turned their breasts into eyes and their navels into mouths. They stood on a stage and whistled the tune from "The Bridge on the River Kwai." Such events, Michael Gesner thinks, are a thing of the past. Clothes-free advocates have realized that getting their point across to the public requires cultivating an earnest image, so they are increasingly careful not to be thought either indecent or inane, even among themselves.

ONE reason nudists have found it difficult to convince critics that they are right (or, at least, to prevail on critics to leave them alone) is that many people connect nudity with sex. Howard Relin, the Rochester district attorney who prosecuted the Topfree women in 1986 and again this year, explained on the "Donahue" show that one purpose of the state law against nudity was to reduce sex crimes. Spend some time among nudists, however, and you will find it hard not to agree with an argument that many of them like to make, which is that clothes are what make bodies titillating. One nude draped on a settee in a dimly lit room may be sexy, but a hundred nudes standing in line for tuna salad at high noon in the mess hall are anything but. The thoughts that such a sight brings to mind are less of sex than of distressfully unprotected situations, in Army-induction centers, hospital wards, and detention camps.

To help clothing-optional advocates make it clear to the rest of the world that they are not sexual deviates, the 1989 Naturist Eastern Gathering offered a three-hour workshop after lunch on Saturday titled "How Do We Come Across on TV?" It was to have been held outside in the sun, but it was moved into the recreation hall, because of a threat of rain. Several hundred metal folding chairs that seemed especially small, perhaps designed for children, were set up in rows, with a single aisle down the center. This was a popular event; nearly every chair was filled. The humid air of the recreation hall smelled of suntan lotion.

The workshop was conducted by Roy Henderson and Jeanette Alexander, a husband-and-wife team who run a consulting firm in Palm Beach called Power Speaking. Henderson, a ruddy middle-aged man with sun-streaked blond hair and a well-muscled body, wearing bluejeans and a T-shirt, announced that the workshop would be run as a simulated television talk show. Seven nude volunteers who had been marshalled as the talk show's guests were seated on the stage, and Henderson told viewers on one side of the aisle to act "anti-nudity." Their job was to ask tough questions and give the panelists a hard time. Viewers on the other side of the aisle could be the "pro-nudity" audience, and were told to cheer and clap whenever someone on the panel made a good point.

After explaining the rules, Henderson walked back to a video camera set up on a tripod in the aisle, dropped his pants, and began taping. Ms. Alexander, a young and pretty blonde who looks like a television-talk-show host, wore clothes and acted as the program's moderator, affecting a belligerent style, unsympathetic to the nudist cause, and asking distasteful questions aimed at arousing the worst fears in a non-nudist audience. "If you had your way, I could be shopping in the mall with my children, and we could run into a bunch of naked people having an orgy! How do I explain that to my kids?" she asked.

A panelist responded that nudists don't want to go to the mall nude, but the explanation took too much time and elicited few cheers from the pro-nudity side of the audience.

"Have you no shame?" cried out a member of the audience from the anti-nudity side of the aisle. The question evoked derisive laughter from the whole room, because they had all heard it before and thought it stupid. A panelist said a Roper poll revealed that thirty per cent of Americans had gone swimming nude with a mixed group of men and women. Pro-nudists clapped, but Lee Baxandall stood up and corrected him, saying that the figure was actually eighteen per cent. Some nudists in attendance were already experienced at handling questions; they had appeared on Sally Jessy Raphael's show or on the notorious Geraldo Rivera program that featured the host himself in a hot tub, apparently nude. Still, there was much to learn. The nudists were taught to keep their answers brief and interesting, and to turn an antagonistic question into an opportunity to say something good about being nude.

Arne Eriksen, the Norwegian-born executive director of the A.S.A., said later that he liked the idea of the media workshop, because achieving favorable public relations was the most important thing nudists could do to help their cause. "I don't believe in confrontation," he said. "I believe in civil cases through the courts. Even better than those is to attack the laws before they are passed. That's positive." A longtime nudist, Eriksen is not happy about the naturists' combative style, and doesn't even like the term "naturist." "It means you love nature, not that you are nude," he said. "To me, a nudist is a nudist is a nudist, whether he does it in a club or on the beach." Eriksen, a lawyer, lives in Kissimmee, Florida, in Cypress Cove, a luxurious nudist resort-community of air-conditioned modular homes, which features all imaginable recreational amenities and also the American Nudist Research Library—the largest private collection of nudist books, magazines, videos, and court records in this country. He is a genial, white-haired gentleman, and despite his nudist affiliation he wore a bathing suit at the Naturist Eastern Gathering. "I am dressed more often than not, particularly when I go around and talk to people, because otherwise you have to carry around a towel to sit on," he said. "You have to be practical. In my office, I dress like any New York lawyer."

Turner Stokes, of the National Capital Sun Club, in the Washington area, who was recently appointed by the A.S.A. to the position of government-affairs chairman, agreed with Eriksen about avoiding confrontation. Stokes, who is busy re-organizing NUDEPAC,

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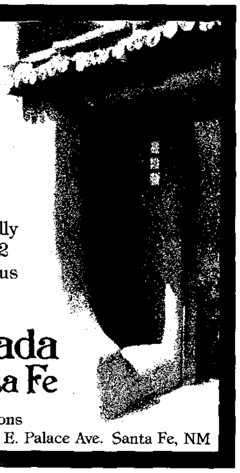

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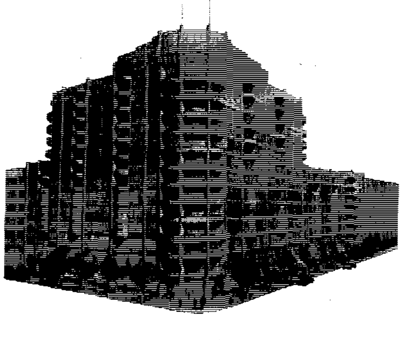

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which stands for Nudists/Naturists United to Demand Equity Political Action Committee, said he thought that it was bad when nudists were arrested, even if they were morally right. He would prefer to have nudists stay out of court except in civil cases, and direct their attention to eliminating anti-nudist laws and educating lawmakers and judges about nudism. "You have to create the political and public image such that the judges are willing to make the right decisions," he said.

For many in the clothes-free movement, however, breaking a law seems to be the only effective way of trying to strike it down. Rochester naturists did lobby successfully to exclude breast-feeding mothers from the anti-nudity statute in 1984, but they have made no progress in their attempts to get legislators to repeal the law altogether. That was why they got themselves arrested on June 24th—to bring the case into court, where they planned to admit that they had been bare-breasted and then to argue against the law.

THE trial of the People v. Susan David et al. began on a chilly, bright September morning at the Monroe County Hall of Justice. The defendants were dressed as properly as teachers on the first day of school: there was not a hint of flesh visible even on legs, back, or arms. Of the ten women, ranging in age from twenty-one to sixty-one, some were wearing demure flower-printed dresses and others tailored white shirts, dark pants, and heavy shoes. Mary Lou Schloss wore a baggy dress that reached to her ankles, concealing her figure.

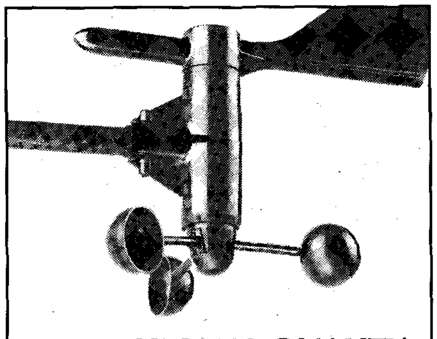
Before the trial of the Topfree Ten started, the judge, John M. Regan, of the Rochester City Court, processed about an hour's worth of cases involving assorted miscreants and wayward youths. There was a pregnant prostitute who had been arrested five times in the last four weeks; a skinny teen-age father, wearing a T-shirt with the words "Kill 'Em All," who promised to continue his court-ordered treatment; and half a dozen young men who trudged in wearing tan jail garments and fidgeted while quick deals were made by the D.A., the public defender, and the court. Judge Regan's reputation is that of a conservative who is slow to reach judgment, and although the ten women believed that he took what they called an "anti-choice" position on abortion, they believed that they had a judge who would let them have their say and could make a fair decision, even if, as they hoped, it meant declaring New York Statute 245.01, "Exposure of a Person," unconstitutional.

Eight of the women were represented by a Rochester lawyer named Sharon Kelly Sayers, and one was represented by the public defender, Jeffrey Wicks. Mary Lou Schloss, confident that she could make a case for her right to be bare-breasted, had informed the court immediately after her arrest that she intended to represent herself. The district attorney's office had assigned Assistant District Attorney Ann Chase to present the case for the people. Her strategy was uncomplicated: to prove that the accused women knowingly violated the law by exposing their breasts below the areola—the halo of pigmented skin that defines the outer edge of the nipple, and is specified as the forbidden zone by Statute 245.01. As Ms. Chase stood before the bench and made her opening statement in a quiet, steady voice, Judge Regan pondered the pronunciation of "areola." Ms. Chase had said "a-*rail*-ea."

"Do you mean 'a-*ree*-o-la?' " the Judge asked, sending Morley Schloss and some of the defendants into fits of gleeful snickering. The Judge soberly explained that because this might be an important word during the proceedings he wanted to be certain.

Since for the ten women the trial was not a question of guilt or innocence but, rather, a fight for equality, their defense dealt not with the facts of their violation of the law on June 24th (which they conceded) but with the principles involved. The first defense lawyer to speak, Jeffrey Wicks, asked that the Judge evaluate all the evidence in terms of equal protection. Wicks, a tall, gaunt man who had shown himself a model of swift efficiency in processing the common-criminal cases, pointed to the defendants during his opening statement and declared, "They are here only because they are women . . . accused of doing something men do every day."

Sayers offered an opening statement embellished with irony, referring to the "gross, lewd, disgusting, repulsive" behavior of her clients—"taking off their shirts on a hot day." The Judge seemed unimpressed by her ap-



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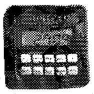

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proach, and questioned her about her choice of language. As he leafed through a lawbook before him, he asked her if the words "repulsive" and "disgusting" had been part of any legal opinion regarding indecent exposure. Reluctantly, she admitted that she had inferred those words from the law's use of the word "lewd."

During cross-examination of the police officers who were the state's witnesses, Sayers tried time and again to prove that the women were arrested only because they were women. She asked Deputy Zink if he had arrested any men that day on the Durand-Eastman beach. He shifted uncomfortably on the witness stand, looked at the lawyer as though she were addlepated, and said no. She asked him why not. He answered, "Because they had no breasts to expose." Sayers then asked Zink how he knew that the people he arrested were women. Zink blushed, looked up at the Judge, and answered, "I'm sixty years old. I know what a woman looks like. They have breasts and hairdos."

As a feminist who has fought long and hard against compulsory clothing, Mary Lou Schloss missed no opportunity to illuminate for the court the immorality and inequity of the law. Using questions of a type more familiar on television talk shows than in a courtroom, she tried to show how women forced to cover their breasts feel oppressed. "Have you had any personal experiences that would affect your interest in being topfree?" she asked each of the defendants, and each justified taking off her top in terms of society's wrongs against women. The law, they all testified, makes women feel bad about their bodies, and, worse, it makes them feel like second-class citizens, who don't have the right to be as comfortable as men when they want to swim or get a tan.

By the time the Schlosses returned home after the first day of the trial, it was twilight. Morley Schloss turned on the television set and his video recorder and flipped back and forth among channels, recording coverage of the trial on local news broadcasts. When visitors arrived, he was on the phone, his voice high and excited as he covered the mouthpiece and exulted, "We got it on all three channels!" Moments later, he hung up the phone and yelled "Bingo!" He had just confirmed the arrival time of Rita Freed-

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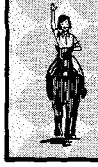

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man, a defense witness. Freedman, the author of books entitled "Beauty Bound" and "Bodylove," would present expert testimony on the pain and suffering undergone by American women who are encouraged to feel ashamed of their bodies. The Schlosses were temporarily elated by the news. Then Mary Lou collapsed with a sigh on a living-room couch and wearily rubbed her eyes. "I would rather go to the dentist and have my teeth filled than do what I am doing," she said. "I am not a public speaker. It is not my style. It goes so fast. I don't have a chance to think of everything I should, to think it through, talk it through. It is very stressful. But I must defend myself, because I was there. There is no way lawyers can be aware of all the things I am aware of." For Mary Lou Schloss, the issues involved were personal and moral, and the gist of her defense was that forcing women to cover their breasts is a form of discrimination that harms the best interests of the government, because it promotes unnecessary cosmetic surgery, discourages breast-feeding, and impairs women's physical and mental health.

On the third and last day of testimony, after a barrage of arguments from defense witnesses that a statute suppressing the sight of breasts leads to an unnatural and hurtful obsession with them, Mary Lou Schloss sought to enter three magazines as evidence to prove her case that bare breasts are acceptable by community standards: the twenty-fifth-anniversary issue of *Sports Illustrated*, which included pictures of beautiful young women in scanty swimsuits that she contended would violate the law in New York State, and recent issues of the *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Glamour* that contained pictures in which breasts were clearly visible. Judge Regan did not accept the magazines as evidence, ruling them irrelevant. He did, however, accept a compilation of the legislative history of Statute 245.01, which, Schloss said, showed that the law—originally titled "Exposure of a Female"—was enacted to deal with the problem of topless waitresses, not swimmers on public beaches. When the law was changed, in 1983, to "Exposure of a Person," it was a response to overt sexuality on the beach at Jacob Riis Park in Queens, she said. Her point was that the state legislature never intended to prevent otherwise law-abiding women from being topfree on the beach.

When it was over, the Schlosses felt good about the trial. They had made most of the points they wanted to make, and they were confident that they could win, thereby striking down the law and gaining the right for all women in New York State to bare their breasts. Two and a half months later, on December 13th, after considering the briefs submitted by both sides, Judge Regan announced his decision: guilty.

Nine of the Topfree Ten (the case against Tierney O'Brien-Dovan had been dismissed on the last day of the trial because she was a nursing mother) were given conditional discharges, which means that they can be resentenced if they take their tops off again within a year. Three of them—Mary Lou Schloss, Ramona Santorelli, and Kathie Reilly, all of whom had been arrested for taking off their tops in 1986—were fined a hundred dollars each, and the six others were fined fifty dollars each. Judge Regan agreed with the defendants that the law treats women differently from men, but ruled that discrimination was necessary to achieve public decency. He said that the female breast does possess erotic properties that the male breast does not, at least in our society; and in his ruling he referred to the Garden of Eden scene from the book of Genesis, to show that nudity has provoked shame and immorality throughout Judeo-Christian history.

Now Mary Lou Schloss is worrying about the 1990 Topfree Equality Picnic: if she is caught bare-breasted again, she faces a possible maximum fine of two hundred and fifty dollars or fifteen days in jail, or both, plus whatever legal battles a new arrest will bring. She was especially irritated about losing this time, because she and Morley had been so certain they could win. Of course, they will appeal the decision and carry on their fight for unclothed-body acceptance just as surely as their unruly front-yard garden will bloom again in spring. "This won't be over until that law is laughed off the books," Morley Schloss said. Unlike Adam, who covered himself with a fig leaf and told God, "I was afraid because I was naked," modern nudists and naturists want a second chance in Eden. —JANE AND MICHAEL STERN

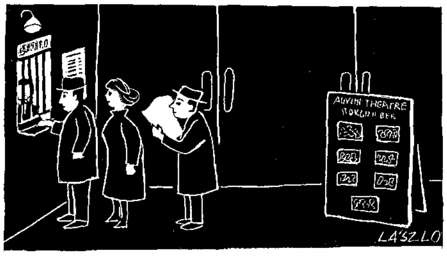
THE THEATRE

Beckett and Havel

THE most stirring event of this theatre season—On, Off, or Off Off Broadway—is "By and for Havel," a pair of brief revivals in the small studio downstairs at the John Houseman. The first of them, "Audience," is one of a trio of autobiographical one-acters by Václav Havel, and was originally done at the Public in 1983, under the title "Interview." The scene is the office of a brewmaster, where a character called Vanek (a stand-in for the author, who after he was released from prison in 1977 got a job pushing beer barrels around a brewery) has been summoned. The brewmaster, downing one glass of beer after another, and pressing beer on the reluctant Vanek, gets drunker and drunker, losing coherence along the way. Eventually, the reason for the interview becomes clear—two reasons, actually. The brewmaster wants Vanek to bring an actress named Georgina Something around to the brewery so he can meet her. Vanek agrees to do so. The brewmaster also wants Vanek to inform on some of his colleagues at work and on some of his writer friends. Vanek refuses, but by this time the brewmaster is too drunk for argument. He puts his head on his desk and passes out. Vanek starts to leave, but just as he gets to the door the brewmaster awakens and blankly starts the scene all over again. The performances, under Vasek Simek's direction, are highly satisfactory. The brewmaster is played with relish by Kevin O'Connor, the reluctant Vanek by Lou Brockway. The translation is unattributed, which is just as well.

The second play—*for* Havel—is Samuel Beckett's eloquent "Catastrophe," which he wrote in 1983 and dedicated to Havel, who was then in prison yet again. ("Catastrophe" was originally published in *The New Yorker.*) The scene is a bare stage during a final rehearsal. The director (Mr. O'Connor), dressed in a fur hat and a fur coat, confronts the protagonist (Mr. Brockway), a gaunt, silent figure in a black hat and a cloak that covers his body; he stands on a plinth, his head bowed. The dialogue consists entirely of the orders that the director gives to his assistant (Evelyn Tuths) and the answers she gives to his questions. "Why the hat?" "To help hide the face." "Why the gown?" "To have him all black." "What has he on underneath?" "His night attire." "Color?" "Ash." "How's the skull?" "A few tufts." And so on. The director leaves the stage, to sit out front, and continues to give orders. At the end, the protagonist stands bareheaded and shivering in gray pajamas, his hands joined together and his head lowered. In the original version, the stage darkens and a spotlight shines on his suffering face, and there is a sound effect of applause. In this production, the arms are raised, the face is triumphant, and, as the Czech anthem is heard, the applause is real. So were my tears—for Havel, and for Beckett, who died a week before Havel became President of Czechoslovakia.

"BURNER'S FROLIC," a production of the Negro Ensemble Company at Theatre Four, is the fourth in a series of plays by Charles Fuller about the activities (and the plight) of freed slaves in the years following the Civil War. The setting is Virginia in 1876—specifically, a picnic on the lawn of a middle-aged black businessman named Burner, who is planning to run for office. His opponent is a corrupt and dangerous man named Kimble, a white supremacist. The play itself is a matter of small episodes—dangerous or humorous or sad or just domestic—among people who know one another very well, and although it seems to lack a strong dramatic tug, its final effect is dramatic indeed. The one unifying element is a white political meeting nearby, and the awareness of everyone at the rally that armed whites could show up at any moment and put an end to Burner's plans, if not to Burner himself. The words "White folks comin' " become terrifying, and justly so, especially if one remembers the fate of the freed slaves during the last part of the nineteenth century.



Mr. Fuller, the author of "The Brownsville Raid," "A Soldier's Play," and "Zooman and the Sign," is a fine, experienced dramatist, who knows all about constructing conventional plays. This series is a kind of experiment; the first three plays were "Sally," "Prince," and "Jonquil," all of them made up of intimate details. Some characters travel from one play to the next; others appear, then leave forever. Once the series is complete, we may realize that Charles Fuller has opened up a whole new world to us. He is most fortunate in having Douglas Turner Ward, the artistic director of the Negro Ensemble Company, as his director, and an able cast, which lives up to Ward's high standards. Adam Wade is Burner, Sandra Nutt is his wife, Graham Brown is a silky clergyman, and Samuel Jackson, Ed Wheeler, Charles Weldon, William Mooney, Cynthia Bond, and William Jay are among the others at hand.

BOB KINGDOM is a Welsh actor who looks like every picture of Dylan Thomas you've ever seen—which gives him a head start that he doesn't really need in his "Dylan Thomas: Return Journey," a one-man show at the Hudson Guild. Mr. Kingdom does so well by Thomas's poems and letters and narratives of various kinds (which he and Anthony Hopkins, his director, have assembled) that he could just as well look like Paul Newman. It's the words and the voice that matter, and the acting. Like Alec Guinness and Emlyn Williams, who have also played Dylan Thomas, Mr. Kingdom presents a performance, never an impersonation. As I listened to the selections, many of them familiar, it struck me—and not for the first time—that, with a few obvious exceptions, there is more wit and feeling and rollicking comedy, and even beauty, in the prose than in the poems. At any rate, the two highest points for me in an evening way above sea level were an account of a trip by charabanc into the Welsh countryside and a memoir of the poet's return to Swansea to pick up traces of himself as a boy. The show will run through March 18th.

—EDITH OLIVER

MUSICAL EVENTS

Russian

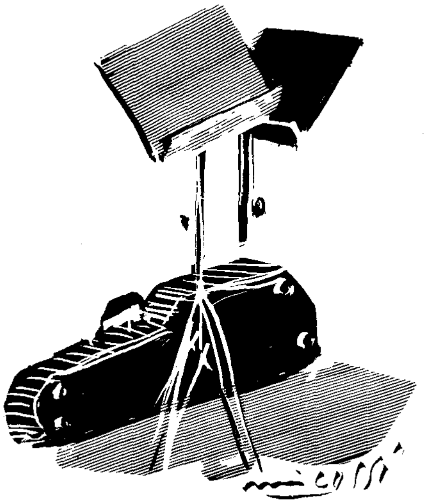
Benjamin Fleischmann’s short, good opera, “Rothschild’s Violin,” was given its first American performance last month, by the Juilliard Opera Center. Fleischmann, a pupil of Shostakovich, was killed in the defense of Leningrad, in 1941. He was twenty-eight. He had finished “Rothschild’s Violin” in piano score and had orchestrated, we are told, perhaps a third of it. Shostakovich completed the orchestration. There was a Moscow radio performance in 1962, a Leningrad production in 1968, and a recording, conducted by Rozhdestvensky, in 1983.

From the Chekhov story of the same title Fleischmann devised a short libretto, and then he poured music into it. The protagonist, Jacob Ivanov, is a village coffinmaker and occasional guest fiddler in a klezmer band: seventy years old, joyless, avaricious, and “obsessed by hatred and contempt for Jews”—especially for the band’s flutist, Rothschild (nicknamed for “the noted millionaire”). Jacob’s wife, Martha, announces that she is dying, and seems content to be doing so; he makes her coffin, grudging labor for which he will not be paid. On her deathbed, she reminds him of their early days together:

> “God gave us a little fair-haired baby, remember? We were always sitting by the river, you and I, singing songs under the willow tree. . . . The little girl died.”
>
> Jacob cudgelled his brains, but could recall neither baby nor willow.

After Martha’s funeral, he reflects that he never once showed her any kindness. When Rothschild comes to ask him to play at a wedding, he drives the Jew away; urchins and village dogs join in the chase. Jacob wanders down to the river. Memories return. The willow is still there, but the birches on the far bank have been felled. “Why do people always do the wrong things? Why had Jacob spent all his life cursing, bellowing, threatening people with his fists, ill-treating his wife? And what, oh what, was the point of scaring and insulting that Jew just now?” His own death approaches. “Jacob went out of the hut and sat in the doorway clasping the fiddle to his breast. Thinking of his wasted, profitless life, he started playing he knew not what, but it came out poignantly moving and tears coursed down his cheeks. The harder he thought the sadder grew the fiddle’s song.” He bequeaths his violin to Rothschild, who gives up the flute and on the violin plays melodies that move all hearts—especially when he tries to repeat Jacob’s strains. “So popular is this new tune in town that merchants and officials are always asking Rothschild over and making him play it a dozen times.”

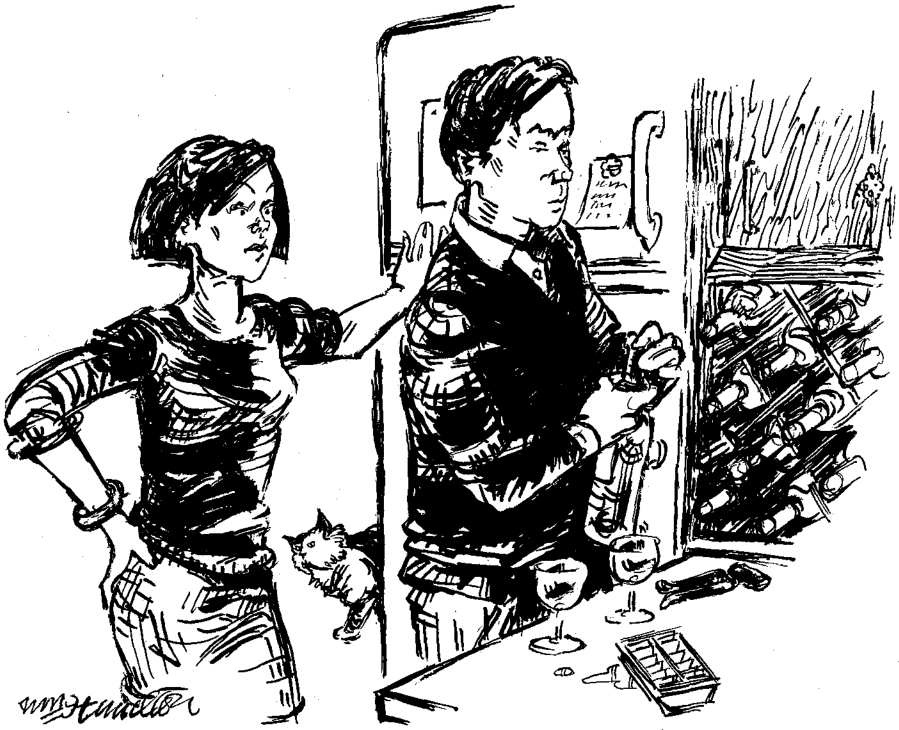
A sad, stern little tragedy, touched at the close by grace, but a grace itself touched by irony: death is welcome, Jacob reflects, for by being dead one can save a good deal of money. Chekhov tells the tale unsentimentally, with delicate, unsparing precision, and so does Fleischmann, although he becomes more openly emotional at the close. The opera lasts about forty minutes. The second half, occupied with Jacob’s reflections after Martha’s death, includes a warm F-major arietta, with an almost Bellinian tune, and passes into a violin solo for Rothschild, which swells into a long full-orchestra coda. In the first half, there are bright episodes for the klezmer band, a brief solo for Martha (accompanied by Rothschild’s flute, as he plays outside a neighbor’s house), and a brief, cruel chase scene. Fleischmann’s music recalls Shostakovich at his gentlest and most lyrical—without the passages of neurotic intensity and sadness, and equally without the manic caricature quality of episodes in “The Nose” and “Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk.” “The Nose” is after Gogol, “Lady Macbeth” after Leskov. Perhaps if Shostakovich had chosen to essay a Chekhov opera it might have come out something like this; perhaps, after completing his pupil’s work, he felt no need to do so. “Rothschild’s Violin” strikes me—and seems to have struck many people—as a small masterpiece.



The Juilliard performance was given in Russian, and that inevitably damped the dramatic impact. (Surtitles were some help, but they are no substitute for the operatic adventure of following words and music at once.) The Jacob was Valentin Peytchinov, a Juilliard Opera Center Young Artist, who has sung Mephistopheles, Don Basilio, Colline in his native Bulgaria. He was confident but rather blunt: concerned more with volume than with precise, focussed pitch. He seemed to regard his role as a romantic juvenile lead; Martha as portrayed by Susan Toth Shafer could have been his grandmother. The Rothschild was Charles Workman, a tenor of merit, intelligent and accurate. Christopher Mattaliano’s staging was somewhat loose, and the spaces of Allen Moyer’s set were too open to hold the drama securely. But Bruno Ferrandis led the Juilliard Symphony in a gripping account of the score.

“Rothschild’s Violin” was followed by a strong, serious performance of Kurt Weill’s “The Seven Deadly Sins,” cleverly directed by Mr. Mattaliano, neatly choreographed by Jennifer Muller, cunningly costumed by Mr. Moyer, strikingly lit by John Gleason, and conducted by Mr. Ferrandis with romantic force. How perennially potent and disturbing the piece is! The singing Anna, Susan Rosenbaum, a Pamina, had the right unaffected candor; the dancing Anna, Suzanne Auzias de Turenne, was limpid, beautiful, and touching. The male-voice quartet—Gregory Cross, Mr. Workman, Wei-Long Tao, and Scott Wilde—was good. The dancers Dylan Newcomb and José Almonté gave gleaming performances as the various men in Anna’s career. Teresa Stratas has postponed her Brooklyn Academy production of the “Sins” because, she says, she can find no suitable English translation of the Brecht text. Michael Feingold’s, which the Juilliard chose, is not altogether happy, but the version by W. H. Auden and Chester Kallman has always seemed to me to combine Brechtian bite, American wit, and good theatre poetry.

Tchaikovsky's "The Maid of Orleans" was given its New York première last month, in Carnegie Hall, by Eve Queler's Opera Orchestra of New York. (The American première was in Reno, fourteen years ago.) An unwieldy but not an uninteresting opera, it is revived in Europe from time to time; a Munich production this season, with Waltraud Meier as its heroine, has been much praised. The piece works on the stage, just, but since there are several Russian operas, beyond the handful of those commonly performed in this country, with more claim to production, one could not urge it on a company that has no Glinka, Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov, Prokofiev, or Shostakovich in its repertory. An occasional concert performance, strongly cast, seems about right; once again, Miss Queler has put us in her debt.



"*What good does it do to send signals to someone who just scrambles them?*"

• •

In a famous 1878 letter Tchaikovsky described his need for operatic characters, like Tatiana and Onegin, with whom he could identify. "I don't understand the feelings of an Egyptian princess, of a pharaoh, of some crazy Nubian woman. . . . I need a subject without kings and queens, tumultuous crowd effects, battles, marches—in short, all the things that are the attributes of grand opera." Later that year, he encountered Schiller's "Jungfrau von Orleans," and embarked on a grand opera of the kind he had deplored. The Meyerbeerian pages, however, are not the weakest part of "The Maid of Orleans." Tchaikovsky—witness his ballets—was a dab hand at processional and ceremonial music; the long Chinon divertissement, the Rheims assembly, and the march to the scaffold are well composed. He began by setting Joan's second-act narrative—a moving and beautiful passage, written in his first, excited response to the subject. Later, the flame of inspiration often burned low. His biographer David Brown writes fairly of "step-by-step setting of a libretto," "melodic parsimony," and a "flow of musical prose" with but rare lyrical or dramatic landmarks. When one considers how the opera was made, its patchiness is unsurprising.

Thomas Mann described "Die Jungfrau von Orleans" as "an opera in words," and indeed it does seem to be written in arias, duets, ensembles, with much variety of texture and tone. It is a beautiful work but presents a special challenge to composers. In two of his late plays—"Maria Stuart" and "Die Braut von Messina"—Schiller strove to contain violently romantic subject matter within some bounds of classical form; without much difficulty, they yielded shapely librettos for Donizetti and for Fibich. But "Die Jungfrau" and "Wilhelm Tell" are freer, more Shakespearean in structure. "Die Jungfrau," with its short scenes and swift changes of locality, is clearly patterned after—and some of its lines sound echoes from—"Henry IV" and "Henry V." A composer's difficulty can be summarized in the crude practical question: With whom does the heroine sing duets? On the battlefield, Joan encounters a frightened Welsh boy, who begs her not to kill him: his old parents at home will miss him, and he has a fiancée even as beautiful, he tells Joan, as she is. Deaf to his pleas, Joan butchers the boy. The turning point of Schiller's drama comes later, when Joan, again on the battlefield, suddenly feels a surge of sexual attraction toward the English knight Lionel and finds herself unable to take his life. Like Isolde, "I looked into his eyes . . . the sword fell from my hand." She feels that the purity of her mission has been sullied by a moment of sensual weakness, and, as a consequence, is unable to reply when—before the crowds assembled in Rheims for the Dauphin's coronation—her father accuses her of being in league with the Devil. Her silence is construed as guilt. She is exiled, and captured by the English. In her captivity, she recalls Samson; he, too, allowed love to take precedence of patriotic duty. With supernatural strength, Schiller's Joan breaks her chains and—in defiance of history—escapes to lead the French to victory, though dying herself on the field.

Schiller conceived his heroine as a feminine compound of David, the shepherd who rose to lead his people to victory, and Samson, whose amorous emotions distracted him from a similar task. The play is not quite a historical drama nor quite the "romantic tragedy" that Schiller termed it, but something between the two. The central theme, Joan's personal tragedy—that one tainted moment—is not convincingly handled. Both Verdi and Tchaikovsky seem to have felt it. Verdi, whose "Giovanna d'Arco" appeared in 1845, resorted to ruthless simplification: a three-persons-only drama about Joan (torn between patriotism, nostalgia for country life, and love for the Dauphin), her father

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(whose religious fervor outweighs both patriotism and paternal affection), and Charles (who sings some chivalrous, graceful music). Tchaikovsky's approach was less drastic and more complicated. He contemned the Verdi libretto; with Verdi he shared just the decision to let an offstage chorus give tongue to Joan's "voices," which in Schiller are referred to but are not heard by the audience.

Tchaikovsky undertook research. His patroness, Mme. von Meck, sent him a clock with a figure of Joan on it, to tick away while he composed, and Henri-Alexandre Wallon's life of Joan. To his brother he wrote, "I wept a good deal over the passage describing her execution. (When she was led to the stake, she screamed and begged to be beheaded instead of burned.) I felt infinite sorrow for all mankind." He decided to end his opera according to history, not according to Schiller. He began work in Florence, with Joan's narrative. In Paris, he acquired the libretto of Auguste Mermet's "Jeanne d'Arc" (which suggested his opening scene) and a play by Jules Barbier, which had incidental music by Gounod. He continued the composition by working to a schedule on which each day ended with his writing the lines that on the morrow he would set: "Composition is made difficult because I have no libretto prepared, and I have yet to come to any definite plan about the general outline." It is surprising that "The Maid of Orleans" turned out even as well as it did. He toyed with the idea of conflating the Welsh boy with Lionel. Then he decided to make Lionel—an important but passing character in Schiller—his principal baritone: a Burgundian knight, who falls in love with Joan, shifts allegiance from the English to the French, and sings two substantial duets with her, the second a full-fledged, passionate love duet. This Lionel, appearing late in the drama, throws it out of balance, and Joan is unmaidenly for far more than a moment. Paul Friedrich's ingenious *Bühnenfassung* of the opera, which was introduced at Cassel in 1967, tidies things by conflating Lionel with Tchaikovsky's other baritone, Dunois, Joan's lieutenant. It also restores—as Tchaikovsky at the end of his life thought of restoring—the Schiller ending, Joan's death on the battlefield. Miss Queler used the regular version, in which Joan screams out from the flames, amid a flurry of fire music, and is welcomed into Heaven by an angel choir.

Joan, originally a soprano role, was "repointed" for a mezzo when a dramatic mezzo was what the Bolshoi, in 1881, could best provide; Tchaikovsky preferred melodic adjustment to transpositions that would spoil his harmonic plan. Miss Queler's Joan was the American mezzo Dolora Zajick, a Met Azucena. She has an effortlessly big, commanding voice, true through all its range. She sounded to me more like a dramatic soprano than like a mezzo—with B-flats and B's in easy control, and an unwritten high C thrown in for good measure—but also like a singer in need of guidance. She tended to sing everything loudly, for instant effect, without close attention to the sense and the shaping of the Russian words or any intimate revelation of what Joan, at each moment, might be feeling. Moreover—alone in the cast—she sang from a score propped up before her on a music stand, which put a barrier between Joan of Arc and her auditors.

Jorma Hynninen, the Lionel, read his role from a score (hand-held) and sang it assiduously and intently, not freely. The others had the music by heart. Marvis Martin was a pretty Agnes Sorel. Sergei Koptchak, as Joan's father, was monotonously loud. Fan Jing-ma, as Raymond, Joan's village suitor, produced an elegantly formed, exact tenor. For the Dauphin and the Archbishop, Miss Queler had engaged two young Bolshoi soloists: Oleg Kulko's tenor rang out sturdily, steadily, and agreeably once it had risen into the required notes; Gleb Nikolsky, a six-foot-eight bass, came close to comedy with his emphatically rhetorical, gesticulated delivery of the Archbishop's recitative as if it were the dramatic highlight of the evening. Robert Heimann, the Dunois, and Hugh Ping, in two small "messenger" roles, ably completed the large cast. The Chinon minstrels were the Yale Russian Chorus, strolling through the hall as they sang; the New York Choral Society provided village maidens, soldiers, courtiers, knights, ladies, populace, and a semichorus of angels. The ballet music was omitted, but otherwise the cuts were small.

MR. KULKO and Mr. Nikolsky were members of the Russian concert party that Irina Arkhipova (herself the heroine of a "Maid of Orleans" recording) brought to Symphony Space last year. Another member was the Siberian baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky—who went on to win the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition, attracted a good deal of attention, and returned to New York last week to give a Tully Hall song recital, presented by the Opera Orchestra. Nine Tchaikovsky songs formed the first half, nine Rachmaninoff songs the second (the program that he sang in the Wigmore Hall in December)—most of them slow, sad, and in minor keys. Mr. Hvorostovsky, who is twenty-seven, has a voice of uncommon beauty, rich, warm, and smooth. He was not exactly communicative. As each song began, one marvelled at the fine quality of the sound; as it continued, one missed vividness of particular moments, phrases, words. All was carefully studied, but, as Desmond Shawe-Taylor wrote in a review of the Wigmore recital, "he did not give the impression constantly of interpreting a song from the inside," and "consequently, only a few of these affecting songs sprang to life." His first encores were of opera: "The moon is high in the sky," from Rachmaninoff's "Aleko" (the recitative was animated), "Eri tu," from "Un Ballo in Maschera" (nice, unhurried turns), and the Death of Posa, from "Don Carlos." The Verdi arias exposed the only weakness in a near-complete technical equipment: the climactic high notes did not ring and flower; tightly controlled, they closed up. All the same, whatever reservations one may have about a lack of specificity and spontaneity, and a temperamental failure to open up to, confide in, and engage with listeners, Mr. Hvorostovsky deployed in masterly fashion one of the best voices to be heard today. Oleg Boshniakovich was his able accompanist.

—ANDREW PORTER

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[*From the Monmouth* (*Ill.*) *Review Atlas*]

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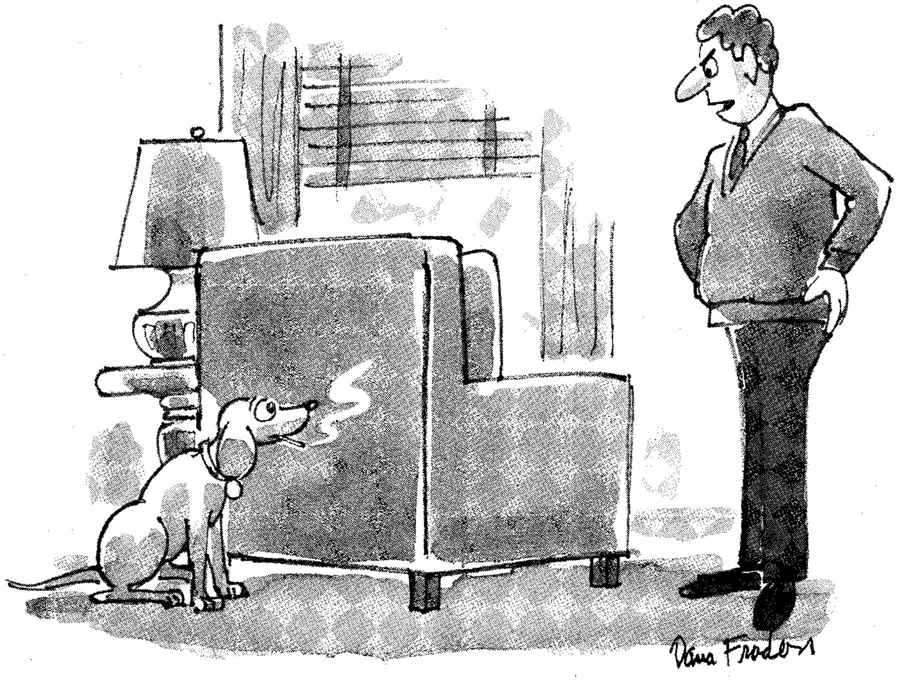
LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

MARCH 8

THE Bush Administration, caught up in the German drive for reunification, now being pressed vigorously by the Administration's great friend West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, is struggling with a large octopus. As a result, a major historical development is coming about in a strange way. At the same time that the Administration is championing reunification—feeling that it has no choice and should try to help determine the terms of such reunification—it is also trying to pacify the fears (economic as well as historical) of its Western European allies, reassure Eastern European nations, which have their own nightmarish history with Germany, and reach an understanding on the subject with an also nervous Soviet Union. The smaller Western European nations resent the fact that the Administration has seemed concerned only with the misgivings of Britain and France, and the British feel—with reason—that the Administration is more interested in the Germans' good will than it is in theirs. Bush, who has courted Kohl from the beginning, seeing his success in the December, 1990, West German elections as in the United States' interest—for reasons that are now outdated and have been taken over by new reasons—has donned Kohl's political agenda, which is quick reunification. If, as is the case in some other matters, Bush seems a bit tone-deaf on this issue—unaware of how deep the anxieties about a reunified Germany run in both Americans and Europeans—this is because he is in fact a bit tone-deaf on the issue and also because there are some things Administration officials believe can't be said aloud. One official says, "If you think reunification is going to happen, the last thing you can do is show any second thoughts if you want to be part of the process." Another official says, "German reunification is going to happen; the more you resist it, the more likely you are to create the kind of Germany you don't want—resentful, angry." Moreover, given the respective distances from Germany as well as the different experiences in the Second World War, the United States is more comfortable with reunification than many—perhaps most—European nations are. Though one of our goals is to try to keep a reunified Germany under control, balanced off by other powers, this is couched in inoffensive code, which comes out in such stated goals as keeping Germany in NATO, finding "a new role for NATO," "keeping Europe stable," and so on.

The Administration has been struggling all along to keep its hand in the designing of a future Germany. Secretary of State James Baker's speech in Berlin, in December, set forth a "framework" for German reunification. At that point, reunification still seemed far off. (It had become conceivable only in the past few months.) When, in late November, Kohl had made a speech offering a ten-point plan for reunification, which was expected to take years, many European and American officials thought that he was getting ahead of the game, and serving his own political purposes. But then the virtual implosion of East Germany—which both the United States and West Germany were trying to forestall—occurred as East Germans continued to pour West, and in late January the East German government moved up its planned elections from May 6th to March 18th. Shortly after that, Kohl made early reunification his own goal, and American officials felt they had no choice but to go along. At that point, one of Baker's criteria for reunification, that it would come about through a gradual, step-by-step process, became moot, and United States officials once again had to figure out how to keep a hand on the steering wheel.

So they came up with another new framework. Baker and his aides love structure: when they have a new problem to deal with, like as not they think structure. And they may well be right, because structure is a means of channelling a process they are trying to guide. But sometimes the structure cracks, as it keeps doing in the case of Germany. Baker is at heart a political broker: in the course of his Washington career he has brokered many a political deal, often with great success. The deal he struck with the Democratic Congress early in the Bush Administration removed military aid to the Contras from the agenda and helped set the stage for last week's electoral triumph of the opposition, headed by Violeta Chamorro, over the Sandinistas. At the time, of course, such an outcome was not foreseen—actually, it was largely unforeseen here until it happened—but Baker's getting the long-running Contra-aid issue off the agenda was characteristic of his style: he's not big on sticking with political losers, and he is big on cutting a deal. Baker sees foreign policy as politics on a global scale, and he brings to it the same approach that he brought to his previous Washington jobs: just as he cultivated powers in Congress and elsewhere in this city he cultivates

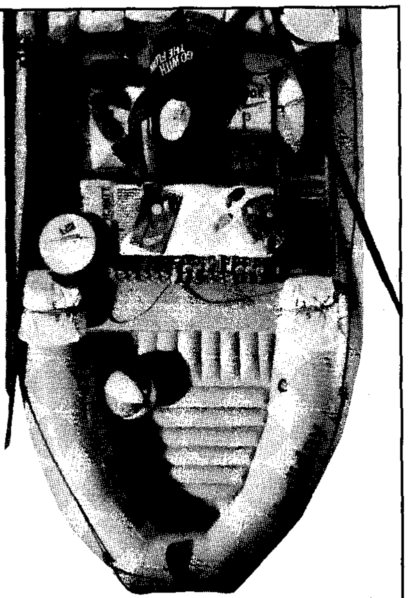


"When did the industry target you for smoking?"

international figures, and he cuts deals. (Such is Baker's reputation for seeing the politics of every situation that when not long ago he addressed the annual National Prayer Breakfast here and most uncharacteristically spoke of his Christian faith—Baker hadn't been known to speak of such a thing publicly before—a great many people here wondered what his angle was.) Bush is also a great cultivator, and the President and his Secretary of State, who are very close, share a view of politics—domestic or international—as having very much to do with the art of massage. Out of all this have come some real successes (as well as some clunkers, as in the case of China, a policy from which Baker keeps his distance), but in pursuing the personal relationships and the structures and the deals, Bush and Baker sometimes seem to be more concerned with the processes than with their substantive outcome.

The Baker team, which is as adept at plumping its successes as it is at disowning losers, eagerly spread the word of its success, in mid-February, in selling the West Germans, the British, the French, and the Soviets on its latest proposed arrangement for working out the terms of German reunification. The new arrangement, called "two-plus-four," established a structure wherein the two Germanys would work out their internal reunification arrangements and the four victorious Second World War Allies would deal with the East and West Germans. There has never been a peace treaty for the war, and the Germans, not interested in a great reminder of their great defeat, don't want one; but the Allied powers have some residual rights in Germany that must be dissolved. The idea was to find a mechanism for resolving the remaining issues as well as for heading off a German-Soviet entente that might result in a neutral Germany, and that could make it easier for Mikhail Gorbachev to accept German reunification.

IN the end, of course, the Soviet Union has no more power to prevent reunification than the United States does, but the Administration tries to be sensitive to Gorbachev's difficult situation. His problems with growing nationalism within the Soviet Union and with a dysfunctional economy show no sign of diminishing, yet as he scores tactical victories and accretes power through moving toward a Presidential system—saying that he needs more power in order to deal with these problems—he takes on more responsibility for the problems. And with *glasnost* has come the surfacing of some troublesome currents, including Russian nationalism and anti-Semitism. (A senior Administration official says that Baker, on his trip to Moscow in February, spoke to Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze about the anti-Semitism, expressing his concern about the anger it could stir in the United States.) So, as Gorbachev has opened up the political system, his foreign policy is subject to more debate—and the reunification of Germany isn't a popular idea. Gorbachev has complained to top Administration officials about the difficulty of getting things done within the Supreme Soviet. Moreover, Gorbachev has been forced, by virtue of his circumstances, to make numerous concessions recently. He is in the process of losing the Baltic states; he gave way to Bush's proposal that both United States and Soviet troops be limited to a hundred and ninety-five thousand each in Central Europe and that the United States be allowed to keep another thirty thousand elsewhere in Europe (thus Gorbachev accepted an imbalance of forces); and now he is having to accept the prospect of a reunited Germany—a topic on which he came under attack at the recent Party plenum. The Soviet Union is not only losing an empire but also having its very system of government come under serious question. Other nations, such as Great Britain, have lost their empires without having their systems of government come undone, or their core nation fly apart. (The United States–Soviet agreement on troop reductions has now come under fire here. The United States agreed during a meeting of NATO and Warsaw Pact nations in Ottawa in mid-February to a Soviet demand that the United States be limited to thirty thousand troops in the rest of Western Europe, even if some, or all, of its troops were ejected from Germany. The President's proposal had been more flexible. This limit on United States troops elsewhere in Europe was Gorbachev's quid pro quo for accepting the uneven over-all troop levels that were so important to the Administration. In hearings last week, the agreement came under criticism from Senate Armed Services



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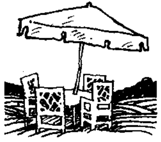

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Committee Chairman Sam Nunn, Democrat of Georgia, civilian and military Pentagon officials, and other Democratic senators as unduly hampering the United States' flexibility to deploy troops in Europe should Germany—as is altogether possible—ask some United States forces to leave its soil. A senior Administration official says that the United States position in the conventional-forces-reduction talks "assumes a united Germany which is a full member of NATO and has a substantial U.S. troop presence." He adds, "If Germany says, 'Thank you very much, you can go home now,' that's a whole new ball game.")

For all these reasons, some United States officials expected Gorbachev to resist the United States' and West Germany's formulation for the new Germany, as he did recently. Under this formulation, ascribed to German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Germany would remain affiliated with NATO in some form, but NATO troops wouldn't be stationed in the former East Germany—formerly Prussia. Gorbachev and Shevardnadze have at times opened the door to such a proposal and at times closed it. United States officials continue to think, however, that in the end the Soviet Union would prefer a Germany anchored to NATO to a free-floating, neutral Germany, subject to no alliance restraints. Moreover, the smaller nations on the eastern border of Germany, which have a history of being overrun by German troops, want more of a say in the arrangements for a reunified Germany. Václav Havel, the new President of Czechoslovakia, made reference to this in his remarkable speech before Congress here a couple of weeks ago. In fact, an Administration official says, most of the smaller nations of Europe—East and West—were upset about the "two-plus-four" arrangement because it was sprung on them suddenly and appeared to cut them out. A senior Administration official said that the interests of the smaller nations will be taken into account, in some other forum, and after several nations complained Baker this week agreed to meet with all the NATO Foreign Ministers to discuss German reunification. Eastern European countries are still waiting for their forum.

And of course Kohl's stubborn refusal to guarantee the present border between Germany and Poland upset not only Poland (which has said that in that case it might want some Soviet troops to remain) but numerous other European countries—and a large number of Americans as well. His finally coming around the day before yesterday to offering such a guarantee (though still not in terms that completely satisfy the Poles) has defused the situation, but Kohl's behavior leaves questions about his sensitivity and future behavior. The Administration's explanation that Kohl's position was based on his perceived electoral exigencies—that he had to appease a right-wing group in order to win—wasn't found very comforting. Administration officials privately said that they were certain Kohl would do the right thing after the election, but that they didn't take Kohl to task for his reluctance to guarantee the border because they didn't want to make life more difficult for him before the election. Further, a senior Administration official said to me recently that the Polish border issue "is something of a bogus issue," that "some issues are being manipulated by people who don't like German unification." (However, some officials privately puzzled over Kohl's insensitivity.) When Kohl still stuck to his position during a press conference after his meeting with Bush at Camp David the weekend before last, continuing to insist that the issue could only "be settled definitively by a freely elected, all-German government and a freely elected all-German parliament," the issue, which not long ago seemed a speck (as did German reunification), blew up here as well as in Europe. (Bush, standing by Kohl's side, said, "The U.S. formally recognizes the current German-Polish border.") Kohl, who said at Camp David that "nobody has any intention of linking the question of national unity with changes of existing borders," didn't seem to understand why people continue to get so upset over the question—and he still doesn't—but Kohl has a certain klutzy side on these matters. (It was he who persuaded President Reagan to visit the cemetery at Bitburg.) Other German leaders were willing to reassure the Poles about the border, and the issue produced a rift between Kohl and Genscher, threatening their coalition. At a press conference on Monday, Kohl said he was surprised by the international criticism. He said, "I cannot see any reason for mistrust." Yesterday, speaking to reporters after he changed his position, Kohl said, "Foreign countries must grasp where German interests lie. We don't need any tutoring here."

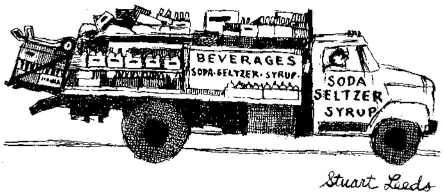
There remains the question of whether the Administration is wise to line up so closely with Kohl—who, after all, could lose the election and in any event won't head Germany forever. Administration officials say that if Kohl lost the election—the Social Democrats are expected to win in East Germany, and some think they could win in the West German elections—their having got the nature of German reunification nailed down with Kohl would be advantageous, because then the Social Democrats (who favor going about reunification more slowly and are less committed to keeping a reunified Germany in NATO) would have to reverse decisions already taken. One official whom I asked how we could be sure a future unified Germany would stick with any arrangements decided now replied, "You can never lock in these arrangements, but you try to establish arrangements that reflect mutual interests. If you take the approach that the Germans have to do this or that, if the four powers dictated, that would be most conducive to falling apart in a short period of time. But in the end the decisions will be made by the German state."

HAVEL'S strong impact here—by the time he left he was something of a rock star—was explained by a number of factors. Mainly, it was the extraordinary nature of the man himself, and the contrast with our politicians (who even seemed to recognize this): he had risked everything, gone to prison, for his beliefs, while politicians here don't make a move without taking a poll. He came across as a man of reflection as well as action, one who had every right to, as he did, summon up Thomas Jefferson in his speech. (Several of the new Eastern European leaders groove on our Founding Fathers, especially Jefferson.) The Czech revolution seems to be our favorite, because it was the most elegant, and the Czechs have a democratic history. (People here don't seem to want to think about Romania or Bulgaria.) Washington has in fact been going through a season of Central European chic. Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, Germans have been streaming through town on one mission or another, and on any given day there are breakfasts, lunches, seminars, receptions, dinners in their honor. There may have been a time when Africans or Latin Americans were in fashion, but that's passé now (at least until Mrs. Chamorro hits town). We throng to meet the Eastern Europeans in part because it's fashionable, and in part because they've done something none of us has.

PERHAPS acting out of long habit, a remarkable number of people here greeted Violeta Chamorro's election victory last week with a renewal of the venomous argument that had gone on for nearly ten years over our policy toward Nicaragua. How this dirt-poor patch of land became an eschatological issue in the United States is bound to puzzle historians, but it was clear from the reaction to what should have been treated as unequivocally good news that old hostilities, and the desire for vindication, run deep. People who had staked out a position at either end of the bitter domestic dispute here, and had accused each other of, on the one hand, naïveté about the Communist threat to our hemisphere, or even sympathy with Marxist-Leninist Sandinistas, or, on the other hand, mindless jingoism, were determined to show that the outcome had proved them right. So an argument, impossible to resolve, over whether Reagan's policy of arming the Contras and seeking the overthrow of the Sandinista regime was responsible for the good turn of events burst forth, with many politicians and columnists just as heated as they had been at the height of the Contra war. (So heated that Senator John Danforth, Republican of Missouri and a thoughtful man of the cloth—he is an ordained Episcopal priest—who had gone to Nicaragua to observe the election, was moved to say in the course of a bitter Senate debate on the subject last week, "Why can't we just shut up for a change?") It was as if the argument over Vietnam had never ended—which, according to several indications, it hasn't.

One voice noticeably absent in the defense of the Reagan policy was that of the Bush Administration. In fact, Bush Administration spokesmen went out of their way to separate themselves from Reagan's policy, and to claim that their own policy, which involved giving up on the Contras, had brought about Mrs. Chamorro's victory—and in this they had much justification. During the transition, Baker and others recognized that Reagan's policy had come to a dead end (Congress was no longer willing to vote military aid to the Contras) and was a political loser, and Baker and his top aides drew up a new approach. Early in the Administration, Baker, after difficult negotiations with the various factions on Capitol Hill, cut his deal with Congress. The deal was covered with camouflage to make it look as if the Bush Administration weren't pulling the plug on the Contras, but that's what it did. In addition to making the deal with Congress, the Bush transition plan contemplated backing the peace plan that had been adopted by five Central American Presidents (including Nicaragua's President Daniel Ortega) and drawn up by Oscar Arias, the President of Costa Rica, and also working with the Europeans and the Soviets to pressure the Sandinistas to hold elections. In a statement that wasn't much noticed at the time, Bush said, upon reaching the agreement with Congress, "We do not claim the right to order the politics of that country. That is for the people of Nicaragua to decide."

According to a background briefing given to the press last week by Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Bernard Aronson, the Administration helped force the Sandinistas to hold the elections by persuading the Soviet Union to stop sending military weapons to Nicaragua (not all military aid ceased), and our European allies to withhold further economic aid pending an election. The Administration made Nicaragua a test of Gorbachev's "new thinking." The Bush Administration was more instrumental than it has let on in getting the internationally known Mrs. Chamorro (the widow of a newspaper publisher believed to have been murdered by agents of former dictator Anastasio Somoza) to lead a coalition of disparate groups into the election, and it admits to having spent about nine million dollars both to aid Mrs. Chamorro and to insure well-publicized international supervision of the election. The hope was that if the Sandinistas couldn't rig the election, the opposition could win. Shortly before the election, Baker began to speak of steps the Administration might take if Ortega won a fair election. In the final stages, the role of Jimmy Carter, who is setting the example for a model ex-President (in sharp contrast to his immediate successor), was crucial—to assuring that the election would be fair, to getting Ortega to accept the result, and to starting as harmonious a transition as possible under the circumstances. Bush Administration officials recognize that the situation will be dicey for a while, but, pleased with their own performance thus far, feel that they can work through the next difficulties. (An official says that before the election the Soviet Union privately assured the Administration that if Mrs. Chamorro won it would cut off its subsidy of about five hundred million dollars a year to the Sandinista army if the Sandinistas tried to keep control of the military.) The Bush Administration is trying to reassure both sides and get a standoff between the two armies, and get the Contras to demobilize without waiting until Mrs. Chamorro takes office on April 25th or until the Sandinistas are disarmed. In perhaps the first public display of a disagreement between them, Bush and Reagan, meeting in Los Angeles in the middle of last week, took differing positions on what is to become of the Contras. Reagan said to reporters that the Contras shouldn't disarm until there is a civilian government, "because Sandinistas had their arms and their weapons long before any Nicaragua citizen picked up arms and became the Contras." When the reporters turned for a response to Bush, who had shortly before told reporters he'd sent a message to the Contras asking them to begin to demobilize, he said, "I've expressed myself on that."



IT should be no surprise that Reagan may be out of touch with what's going on. His videotaped testimony, made for the trial of former national-security adviser John Poindexter, which opened this week, was the combination of befuddlement and canniness—of confusion and lies—that

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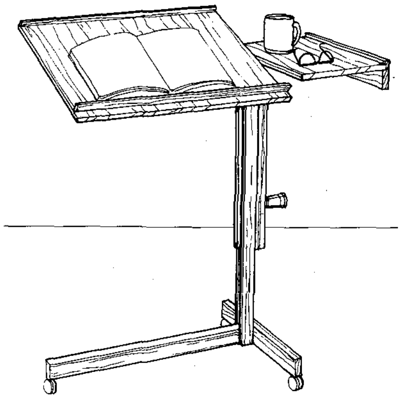

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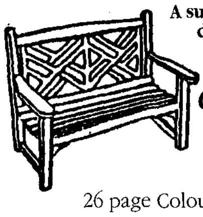

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has marked Reagan's performance throughout the Iran-Contra affair. Throughout Reagan's political career, he had become accustomed to—and was largely indulged in—telling tall tales, to the point that it had become an ingrained part of his act. Some even found it charming. Since he so often got away with it, he had no great compunction to change. Reagan's lying throughout the Iran-Contra affair was explained away by some of his advisers and other defenders as, Oh, well, you know, the old man has trouble keeping things straight, etc. And there was some truth to that. But, to the end, Reagan has thrown sand in our eyes by using his faulty memory—which was mostly a result of his paying little attention to things—to try to convince us that he doesn't remember things that it is inconceivable he had forgotten. Many who read accounts of the videotaped testimony were shocked that the former President couldn't even *remember the name of his own chairman* of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but during his Presidency he confused his own Secretary of Housing and Urban Development with one of a group of mayors he was meeting with, and regularly confused his administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, William Ruckelshaus, with Donald Rumsfeld, his special envoy to the Middle East. We knew that Reagan couldn't carry out the most rudimentary conversations with people on Capitol Hill without reference to his note cards (which members of Congress could always tell he was reading) and that his press conferences were knuckle-whitening experiences for his aides—who often had things to explain afterward. During the Iran-Contra hearings, former chief of staff Donald Regan, explaining one of Reagan's more egregious press-conference misstatements, said that a preparation briefing by Poindexter had "confused the Presidential mind." The fact that Reagan was checked out on much of what was going on in his Administration doesn't mean he was unaware of all of it—especially matters that were of great importance to him, like getting the hostages back and getting weapons to the Contras no matter what Congress said. He himself participated in getting some military aid to the Contras during the period of a congressional ban on such aid, and it's inconceivable that, as he alleged in his videotaped testimony, he was unaware of any evidence of the diversion. ("This is the first time that I have ever seen a reference that actually specified there was a diversion.") It was, after all, Reagan who, in November of 1986, had called a press conference so that his Attorney General, Edwin Meese, could announce the stunning news of the diversion, and the Tower Commission gave details of it. And a reasonable review of the evidence leads one to the conclusion that Reagan knew about the diversion when it took place.

The trials, such as they are, are getting at only bits and pieces of the Iran-Contra story: a little defrauding of the United States government; elements of the cover-up to Congress. The assault on the constitutional system of checks and balances that was at the heart of the Iran-Contra affair isn't on trial; a violation of the Constitution *isn't a violation of the criminal laws.* Even the diversion—which could have been presented as a case of defrauding the United States—isn't on trial, because it was dropped as a result of a deal made between the independent counsel and the Attorney General, Dick Thornburgh, on grounds of national security. Had the issue of the diversion proceeded in court, witnesses would have sought sensitive documents and brought up uncomfortable (to the Administration) information about "black money"—unaccounted-for funds used in covert operations. In fact, Thornburgh's compliance in shutting down large portions of the Iran-Contra case on grounds they would reveal classified information that would endanger national security—the case against Joseph Fernandez, a former C.I.A. official, was blocked altogether—has troubled a number of people here. But much of this information was already known, and most of it would have been more an embarrassment to Reagan—and Bush—than a threat to our national security. And to the end, the former President maintains that he didn't trade arms for hostages, and to the end, his defenders say that we mustn't dwell on these matters because, you see, the President—er, that is—wasn't very aware of what was going on. This is a novel theory of constitutional government.

—ELIZABETH DREW

BOOKS

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

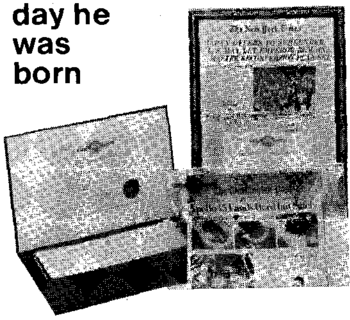
PASSING ON, by Penelope Lively (Grove Weidenfeld; $17.95). Neither Helen Glover, a fiftyish, quietly intelligent part-time librarian, nor her dreamy younger brother Edward, a schoolteacher and nature conservationist, has ever married. When their stubborn, controlling mother dies, they are still living on the ramshackle estate they shared with her, and they stick proudly to many of her principles. Unlike everyone else in their country town, they remain firm in refusing to sell their unspoiled land to speculators, and they resist the counsel of sleek investment advisers pushed on them by their glamorous London sister. But the pair's spinsterish complacency is gradually replaced by self-examination, with which they combat their mother's domineering absence. Helen digs up the evidence of her long-lost romances and falls in giddy love again, and Edward, after a lifetime of keeping silence with himself, shyly begins to record in his journal his own sorrowful movements, along with those of migrating birds. The artful Penelope Lively, who won England's Booker Prize in 1987, never takes a false step; the reader of this book will forget there's an author behind it at all.

WHITE GIRLS, by Lynn Lauber (Norton; $17.95). This fine collection of stories follows the growing up and turning bad of Loretta Dardio in Union, Ohio, where life in the nineteen-fifties and sixties is narrow and defeating, and everyone—male and female, white and black—seems to be waiting to be rescued. Loretta is raised in a small, segregated world of discontented housewives and imperfectly tamed husbands, where things are so dull that any tragedy or rebellion is reduced to welcome scandal. Some girls grow up to work behind the candy counter at Woolworth's or attend secretarial school; others quickly marry. Loretta, meanwhile, is gradually transformed from "an obedient platinum child" into "a dishwater-blond teenager with candied lipstick spread over lips specializing in lies." Unimpressed by her options, she takes up the risky and exciting occupation of dating black boys. The gaps between the stories become frustrating, and the reader's longing for a novel mimics the yearnings of Union's inhabitants, who are circumscribed by neighborhoods and dress codes yet drawn together by a subterranean network of guilt and desire. In the book's final section both the author and the heroine commit a series of dangerous transgressions, but the results are moving and impossible to regret.

GENERAL

WILLIE: THE LIFE OF W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM, by Robert Calder (St. Martin's; $22.95). A full-scale biography of one of the most widely read novelists and short-story writers of this century. Mr. Calder puts Maugham (1874-1965) in a sympathetic light, in an effort to correct what he sees as "the long-standing and inaccurate perception of him as a malicious, bitter, and spiteful misanthrope." The book conveys the complexities of Maugham's personality and the richness and diversity of his long life: the London years as a spectacularly successful playwright; the First World War experiences as a British intelligence agent in Switzerland and Russia; the world travelling, which gave him material for many of his best-selling novels and stories. Mr. Calder does not claim greater literary eminence for Maugham than should rightfully be his. He contests, however, the dismissive view of him as a lightweight writer, who sought money and popularity above all. Maugham entertained a world, and, Mr. Calder states firmly, he never compromised with the standards he set for himself and his work. Photographs.

PROPHET OF THE SANDLOTS: JOURNEYS WITH A MAJOR LEAGUE SCOUT, by Mark Winegardner (Atlantic Monthly; $18.95). Tony Lucadello, who died in 1989, at the



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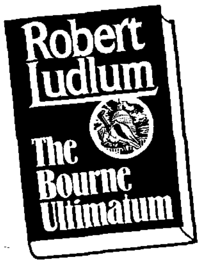

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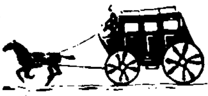

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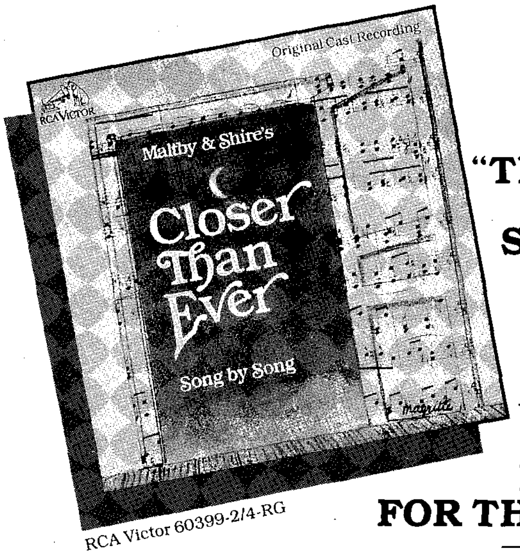

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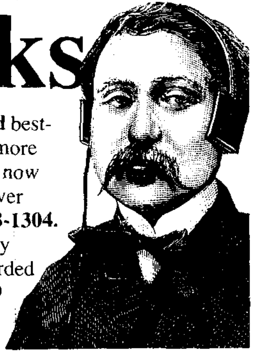

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age of seventy-six, is considered to have been one of the great baseball scouts in the history of the game. From his run-of-the-mill territory (Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan) he plucked fifty players—first for the Chicago Cubs and then for the Phillies—who made it to the big leagues, among them Mike Schmidt, Fergie Jenkins, and Jim Brosnan. Mr. Winegardner got to know Lucadello a few years ago and spent several months following him around the dismal high-school, community-college, and crossroads ballparks, and he recounts those travels with a warmth for the old scout that is both touching and revealing. We see dozens of tin-bat ballgames through the near-X-ray eyes of the scout, and learn dozens of his professional secrets: "Tony hates scouting at night. Players look quicker under the lights. Arms look better. Swings look faster. But it's an illusion"; "Eighty-seven percent of baseball is played below the waist"; "I've never signed a position ballplayer who wore glasses or even contacts, because they get fooled on that low inside pitch."

ONE DRY SEASON: IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MARY KINGSLEY, by Caroline Alexander (Knopf; $18.95). In this irresistible travel memoir, a young American woman follows the route of Mary Kingsley, a dauntless Englishwoman who in 1895 travelled throughout what is now Gabon. (Ms. Alexander reminds us, by way of orientation, that Kingsley's best-known predecessors were Brazza and Du Chaillu, and that Gabon's best-known resident was Albert Schweitzer.) With Kingsley's "Travels in West Africa" as her guide, and "Trader Horn" as a secondary vade mecum, Ms. Alexander went up and down the rivers and traversed the forests of a land that in Kingsley's day was populated by cannibals and missionaries. Ms. Alexander writes well, and she persuasively portrays the men and women—Africans and Europeans, nuns and tribal chiefs—she encountered. Her perceptiveness and her responsiveness are enchanting.

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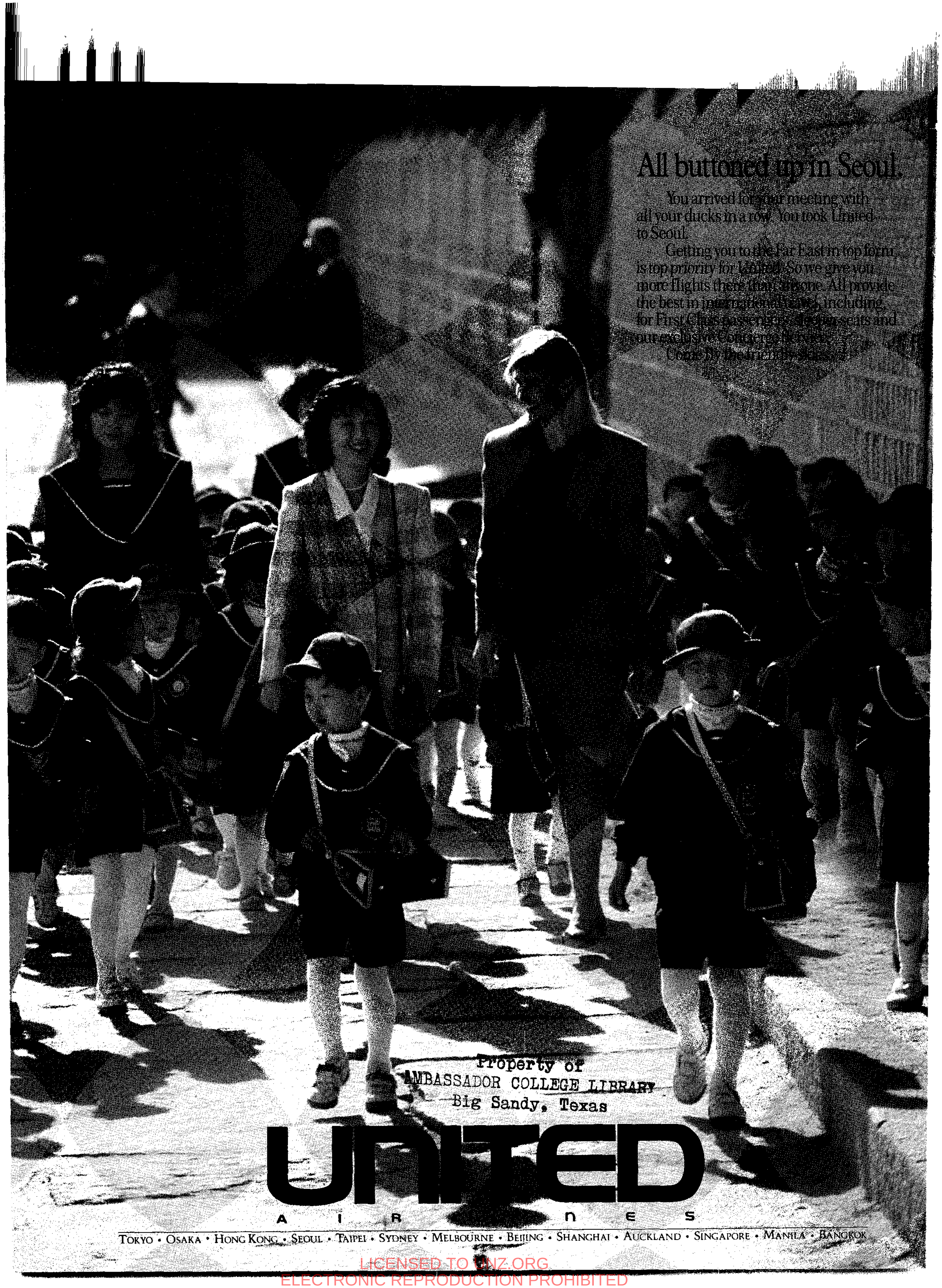

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